

# NEW MASSES



25c

SEPTEMBER  
1926

FRANK  
WALTS



# Embarrassed with Success

**A**CTUALLY because of our success, we are facing a financial crisis on the NEW MASSES. We are expanding faster than our budget anticipated, and to take advantage of this great initial spurt we need more cash in hand.

Our newsstand sales which have mounted so precipitantly mean popularity, but not much revenue. They increase our paper and printing bills without proportionately swelling our balance in the bank.

So we must do some intensive work on a subscription campaign, and that takes money. We are continually amazed at the unsuspected corners from which an enthusiastic reader shouts his approval—along with a check and subscription blank. From all parts of the country, towns we never heard of, letters come in saying: We just happened on a copy of the NEW MASSES and want to be sure to see it regularly. This makes us confident that there are dozens we have not yet discovered for every one of these friends who has accidentally discovered us.

We have got to reach those dozens. In order to do that we must first make a drive for the necessary funds. Concretely, we need:

**A. One Hundred Life Subscribers at \$100 each**

**B. Ten Thousand More Subscribers at \$2 each**

**Before January First**

This magazine is a co-operative venture—co-operative between the editors and the readers. What YOU can do, dear Reader, is to help us reach this double objective. You can get FIVE of those ten thousand subscriptions from among your friends, sending us a ten dollar bill to cover. You can talk to that well-to-do friend of yours, who is so interested in art and the new thing in literature that he will gladly send in that life subscription—"why didn't you tell me about the NEW MASSES before?" he will reproach you. Or perhaps YOU are that well-to-do person yourself.

Quite seriously, this is an urgent S.O.S. We need immediate funds to tide us over the poverty engendered by our success.

Please write all over the dotted lines below.

-----  
DEAR NEW MASSES:

I enclose a hundred dollars, for which please enter a life subscription for

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ADDRESS

I enclose a ten spot. Send the NEW MASSES to:

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# "FUNNIER AND LOUDER"

A CORRESPONDENT whose sincerity we do not question but whose signature is quite undecipherable, makes a difficult demand on the NEW MASSES. He writes:

"I enclose a check for a year's subscription. On the whole I like you. But won't you try to be a little funnier—and not quite so loud?"

We know what our unknown correspondent wants. He wants a miracle, and so do we. But so far all our efforts to add the White House spokesman to our (numerous as rabbits) contributing editors have proved unavailing. Meanwhile, we struggle on and muster what substitutes we can find. Most of them, we admit, are pretty loud. Take Slim Martin. And take Passaic. After all, it is a rather loud-mannered civilization. We wandered all over that town looking for sweetness and light, especially the light touch. We were told to move on at least a dozen times and not one of the cops had a Harvard accent. Take Chapman's Hanging. Funny. Loud, too.

Of course, maybe we'll get the White House spokesman yet. Meanwhile give us credit for discovering an articulate Western Union messenger boy—articulate and very snooty. We have also enlisted the interest of a genial and philosophic waiter—you have undoubtedly met him if you have gone the rounds of the night clubs. He promises eventually to give us the economic, sociological and aesthetic low-down on that chic New York Night Life.

We live and labor and read the impossible demands of idealists like our unknown correspondent. We take them with a grain of salt. On the whole, we prefer the simple and direct critique hurled from the vaudeville gallery on amateur nights: Louder and funnier!

\* \* \*

Mr. E. Haldeman-Julius, who lives, edits, and abstains from cigarettes in the wilds of Kansas, which heaven knows, is no joke, writes us:

"Your magazine is amusing. You deserve a big bunch of readers and I hope you will get them. At that, why shouldn't you be good? Sixty editors on a 32-page magazine. An editor for each half page!"

Mr. E. H-J. exaggerates. There are only fifty-seven as we remember it, representing all the varieties. Anyway, why not? Every contributor and every reader of any magazine worth its salt is in a sense one of its editors. A magazine is either frankly a commercial venture, adapted to the routines of our exploitative civilization, or it expresses a creative relation between its contributors and its readers. Its very essence is cooperative. The active editors direct the orchestra but the contributors—and the readers, too—make the music.

Our business department alleges that this cooperative enterprise of ours is threatened with success. Nonsense. Our business department makes us nervous. "Success" is the great American bore. And with your help (see our house ad) we'd like to continue as un-American and as interesting as possible.



DRAWING BY WILLIAM GROPPER

DELEGATION OF VIRGINS MEETING TO PROTEST AGAINST ART YOUNG'S CARTOON IN THE JULY NEW MASSES—IS NOTHING SACRED?

# NEW MASSES

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## CONTENTS

Cover Design—by Frank Walts	Page
Bored Virgins, A Drawing—by William Gropper	3
Hedley's Little Sunshine Committee, A Drawing—by William Gropper	4
The Brass Knuckles Santa Claus—by Robert Dunn	5
Iss Diss a System? A Drawing—by Otto Soglow	5
Pleasure Bent, A Drawing—by Stein	6
Processional, A Drawing—by Adolph Dehn	7
High Voltage, A Drawing—by Louis Lozowick	8
Bertie, A Story—by Ivan Beede	9
Message to Siberia, A Poem—by Alexander Pushkin. Translated by Max Eastman	9
The Installment Baby, A Drawing—by I. Klein	10
Five Poems—by Kenneth Fearing	11
Shaw at Seventy, A Drawing—by Hugo Gellert	12
Diary of the British Strike—by Raymond W. Postgate	13
In Spring, A Poem—by Whittaker Chambers	13
Principle, Six Drawings—by Art Young	14-15
This Cock-eyed World, A Drawing—by William Gropper	16-17
The Renegade Peasant—by Michael Koltsov. Translated by Bessie Weissman	18
Ida and Davie, A Story—by Libbian Benedict	18
Do the Churches Corrupt Youth?—by Samuel Ornitz	19
Still Life, A Drawing—by Marty Lewis	19
A Woe of a Party, A Drawing—by Maurice Becker	20
Mexican Labor Poster—by Xavier Guerrero	21
A Bunkless Movie—by Edwin Seaver	28
Book Reviews	22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28
by Harbor Allen, Powers Hapgood, John Dos Passos, Robert Dunn, James Rorty, Harry Freeman, McAlister Coleman, and Babette Deutsch	

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## IN THIS ISSUE

### THE WRITERS

Ivan Beede, author of *Chapman's Hanging*, which appeared in the July issue of the NEW MASSES, is one of the young American writers brought out by Ford Maddox Ford's *Transatlantic Review*.

Max Eastman, editor of the old MASSES, is now living in southern France.

Kenneth Fearing is a young poet living in New York. He has contributed to the *Nation*, *Whiz-Bang*, *This Quarter*, *Telling Tales*, and the *New York Herald-Tribune*.

Raymond W. Postgate is assistant editor of *Lansbury's Labour Weekly* and the author of several books on labor economics.

Whittaker Chambers is a young poet who recently left Columbia in protest against the censorship of the undergraduate literary magazine.

Michael Koltsov is a Russian journalist, whose articles have appeared in many Communist publications. Bessie Weissman, translator of the *A Renegade Peasant*, is working with the Russian Telegraph Agency.

Libbian Benedict is a free-lance writer, a native of Kansas City, now living in New York.

Samuel Ornitz, author of *Haunch, Paunch and Jowl*, published anonymously two years ago by Boni and Liveright, is now connected with the MacCauley Co., publishers.

Harry Freeman is a young newspaperman living in New York.

Harbor Allen is publicity secretary for the Civil Liberties Union. He has contributed to *Current History*, *Poetry*, and numerous other periodicals.

Powers Hapgood has worked as a laborer in the coal mines of America, England, China, and Germany.

### THE ARTISTS

Xavier Guerrero is one of the first founders of the famous Syndicate of Painters in Mexico. He has decorated many public buildings in Mexico, and is now editing a paper called *El Machete*.

Adolph Dehn, now in London, writes: "The miner's fight interested me so much that I went down to the Rhonda Valley in South Wales to make drawings and see the life. . . . The miners aren't overeating these days!"

Marty Lewis is a student at the Art Students' League. The NEW MASSES presents his first published work.

Frank Walts, whose theatrical posters amuse New York's bill-board fans, made many covers for the old MASSES.

Otto Soglow has recently been appearing as cartoonist in the *New York World*.



DRAWING BY WILLIAM GROPPER

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AGAINST ART YOUNG'S CARTOON IN THE JULY NEW  
MASSES—IS NOTHING SACRED?

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## HEDLEY'S LITTLE SUNSHINE COMMITTEE

IT COST OVER A MILLION DOLLARS TO BREAK THE I. R. T. STRIKE WITH THE HELP OF THESE BOYS—AND YET SOME MEANIES ARE STILL HOLDING OUT AGAINST THE EIGHT CENT FARE!





GROPPER

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# THE BRASS KNUCKLES SANTA CLAUS

## COMPANY UNIONISM ON THE I. R. T.

By ROBERT DUNN

NOW we know what an "outlaw union" is. We used to hear the Honorable Sam Gompers throwing it into the I. W. W., the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and other non-A. F. of L. bodies. He told the world that they were outlaws—which was supposed to finish them off. But now we have a new use of the term. The *New York Times* and other friends of union labor have seized upon it. An "outlaw union," they declare, is any body of workers that decides to rebel against company unionism and join the American Labor Movement.

This application of the term grows out of the strike of motormen and others on the Interborough Rapid Transit Company of New York City. These workers attempted to throw off the shackles of the company union, known in this instance as the Brotherhood of I. R. T. Employees, and to establish themselves in the Consolidated Railway Workers of Greater New York looking toward affiliation with the A. F. of L. Mr. Frank Hedley, President and General Manager of the company refused to deal with the new union. He claimed he had a sacred contract with his "Within the Family Brotherhood." He would deal only with loyalists. Not with outlaws.

It is interesting to note how Frank Hedley and other \$70,000-a-year executives of the I. R. T. got this way. It started more than ten years ago, before America entered the war. The late Theodore P. Shonts was then head of the company assisted by Mr. Hedley. Mr. Shonts was a paternalist toward his workers in order, of course, to keep them away from "outside" labor unions. He installed a gilt-edged Welfare Department in 1914 and provided his 14,000 workers with athletic associations, a baseball pennant league, voluntary relief, a "Sunshine Committee," (he really called it that) and I. R. T. bands, all under the direction of a welfare expert at \$15,000 a year. Shonts appeared at luncheons given by the National Civic Federation to tell the labor leaders and corporation magnates assembled what sweetness and light was exuded by this Welfare Department, reciting to the delighted luncheonists how one five dollar gold piece was bestowed at Christmas time on all employees of his happy family whose average monthly pay envelope returned less than \$125. Every one thought Mr. Shonts and his company very generous in the role of Santa Claus.

Then out of a clear sky appeared some agitators, otherwise known as business agents, direct from the headquarters of the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employees of America, presided over by William D. Mahon, friend of Gompers and a Civic Federationist himself. These ungrateful agitators proceeded to call a strike of street car workers, first in Yonkers, then in the

Bronx and finally on the lines of the I. R. T. in Manhattan. The subway and "L" men joined the strike, in spite of welfare. They struck in protest against a violated agreement and against the threat of "master and servant" contracts which the company was secretly forcing the men to sign. They struck against the wholesale discharge of workers who had the spirit to wear union buttons.

The company refused to deal with such an alien device as a labor union, and Shonts and Hedley spent over two million dollars to break the strike—63 per cent of this amount going for strike breakers. They also continued to carry out a bright idea—the installation of a company union. It is said that they bought this idea from Mr. Ivy Lee, public relations expert for John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and premier shirt stuffer—more recently associated with attempts to break the Passaic strike. Poison Ivy had just put in a company union out in Colorado after the Ludlow massacre. The I. R. T. got him on its payroll at \$12,000 a year and he obligingly hatched this little scheme.

The company union was installed. The workers were split up into 33 locals, delegates from which were elected to a General Committee. The President of this committee became the virtual overseer and boss of the workers. But the I. R. T. went even farther than most company union practitioners. By fraud and coercion and promises of higher wages it had, even before the strike, induced its workers to sign individual agreements—yellow dog contracts—which, in effect, "closed" the shop to all but "Brotherhood" members. Any worker refusing to join found himself on the street. There was no "freedom in employment" or "American Plan" open shop such as

employers' associations usually advocate in theory when faced with the labor union. It was a 100 per cent closed shop against trade unionism and in favor of the company—a virtual company peonage system, set up and protected by a barrage of words about "the spirit of mutual confidence, good will and happiness," about "man to man" and "united we stand" and many other slogans stolen from the trade union handbook.

It worked. It broke the strike, and the company forthwith returned thanks to the Almighty and to its slaves who had remained "loyal" during the Amalgamated onslaught. The President of the Company observed at the time that "the attitudes our men have manifested will be seen and recognized by the whole country as a monument to manhood." But in 1917 we find the Amalgamated again attempting to line up the workers on the Interborough. Whereupon a resolution written by the legal expert of the company and signed by the officials of the company union was issued. It expressed the servile relationship of the "Brotherhood" representative to the company which controlled his job. In part it read:

"Whereas recently some of the labor agitators of the Amalgamated who unsuccessfully attempted to interrupt service on the I. R. T. lines last fall have returned to the city and publicly announced to the press that they are here to cause trouble . . . the outside labor agitators who are endeavoring to create a controversy are in no way representative of the employees of the I. R. T. Company . . . we have not requested and do not desire them."

And the company union puppets called on the good mayor of the city to prevent "attempts by organized violence to interfere" with their pretty

little inside union. This referred to the organizers of the Amalgamated who had come to town to organize workers with the approval and blessing of Samuel Gompers himself.

As a result of this joint assault of the I. R. T. management and its trained seal union upon the A. F. of L. organizers the efforts of the latter proved fruitless and Mr. Shonts wrote to Oscar Strauss, then Chairman of the Public Service Commission, that he believed it to be against the public interest to have employees affiliated with a labor union, implying that the "Brotherhood" was anything but a labor union. He further asserted that "sympathetic strikes," such as might occur if the workers belonged to a real union, could be averted under "our plan" and under "our own Brotherhood Rules which have been approved by our Directors," meaning the Board of Directors of the I. R. T.

So the Brotherhood flourished and waxed fat. It sent its quota of boys overseas to hang the Kaiser; it attended the Rev. Billy Sunday's burlesque in a body accompanied by the Interborough Band and the Welfare Shepherd; it purchased Liberty Bonds by the barrel and voted for wage decreases to keep the company out of its ever conveniently threatening receivership. And by 1919 we find it calling itself a labor union. In fact the President of the "Brotherhood" then wrote of it as "a progressive formation amongst employees of the Interborough, whereby they, with the approval of the Management, formed themselves into a labor organization." While a company official writing in the Interborough Bulletin, the Family Magazine of this great Family Railroad, called it "the strongest labor organization in New York City to-day, and the members are quite capable of conducting their own affairs without the aid of outsiders and paid professional agitators." Mind you, these agitators were none other than Messrs. Mahon, O'Brien, Fitzgerald, Shea, Reardon, Vahey and other good Irish brethren, the very pillars of the A. F. of L. It nearly breaks one's heart to hear such eminent labor patriots called agitators and "alien highbinders" by these company union helots. They even went so far as to charge the Amalgamated with "preaching the Tyranny of Capitalism and the Oppression of Labor" and referred to these excessively "regular" labor men as "these strangers masquerading in the guise of brothers."

There was nothing too servile for the private "Sisterhood" members to do. They wrote letters to the President of the company addressing him as "Honorable Sir" and assuring him what a big, solid, efficient no-strike organization they had to do his bidding. They called the A. F. of L. union "an outside organization" and said of it: "It can only undermine our discipline, can incite disloyalty among us, and the



DRAWING BY OTTO SOGLOW

ISS DISS A SYSTEM?



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**ISS DISS A SYSTEM?**





DRAWING BY OTTO SOGLOW

ISS DISS A SYSTEM?



## PLEASURE BENT

DRAWING BY STEIN

public will suffer." Note their tears for the public. They are always promising the public no interruption of service. Which means it is a strike-proof union, a union in the Interborough's vest pocket. And so it remained until 1926.

On the tenth anniversary of the "Brotherhood" an eruption took place in what the unctuous editors of the *New York Times* call "self government in subway transportation . . . where the workers have shared in managing industry." Oh, how they have shared! For example they shared in July, 1921, when in order "to show their cooperation with the present management of the company in its efforts to preserve the solvency of the company" they accepted a 10 per cent slash in wages. And they always shared in the company's agitation for a fare increase. Indeed, their only "strike" which lasted but a few hours in 1919 was said to have been the result of collusion between "Brotherhood" and boss on behalf of an increased fare. This abortive strike was called from the offices of the company, over company wires by the present President of the "Brotherhood," Patrick J. Connolly, who, in-

cidentally, was originally a strike-breaker imported from Chicago.

Into the midst of one of these scenes of sharing and tender affection broke the strikers of 1926, specifically the 700 members of Local No. 7 of the "Brotherhood" comprising the motormen and switchmen of the subways. These workers, among the highest skilled in the service, refused longer to endure the annual farce of wage agreements with the company under which wages stood "as is" for another year. After a thirty minutes "conference" between the "Brotherhood's" General Committee and the company the latter was in the habit of announcing that wages would remain as they were for another twelve months. It had happened so in 1925. The motormen were determined it would not be repeated in 1926. Yet it was, and the motormen were one of thirty-three locals bound by the General Committee's agreement. They could stand it no longer. They instructed their delegates to secede from the company union, form a new union and put in demands for wages and conditions.

What happened is familiar to readers of this story. Mr. Hedley, 72

hours before the strike began, was hiring strike breakers and guerillas in half a dozen cities while to the press he breathed hypocritical phrases about the sacredness of his obligations to his slaves. He announced that all strikers would be immediately fired. He pointed to the yellow dog contract. He placed his hand over his heart and talked about the sanctity of agreements and about "keeping faith with the Brotherhood" and how they would all strike if he recognized the new motormen's organization!

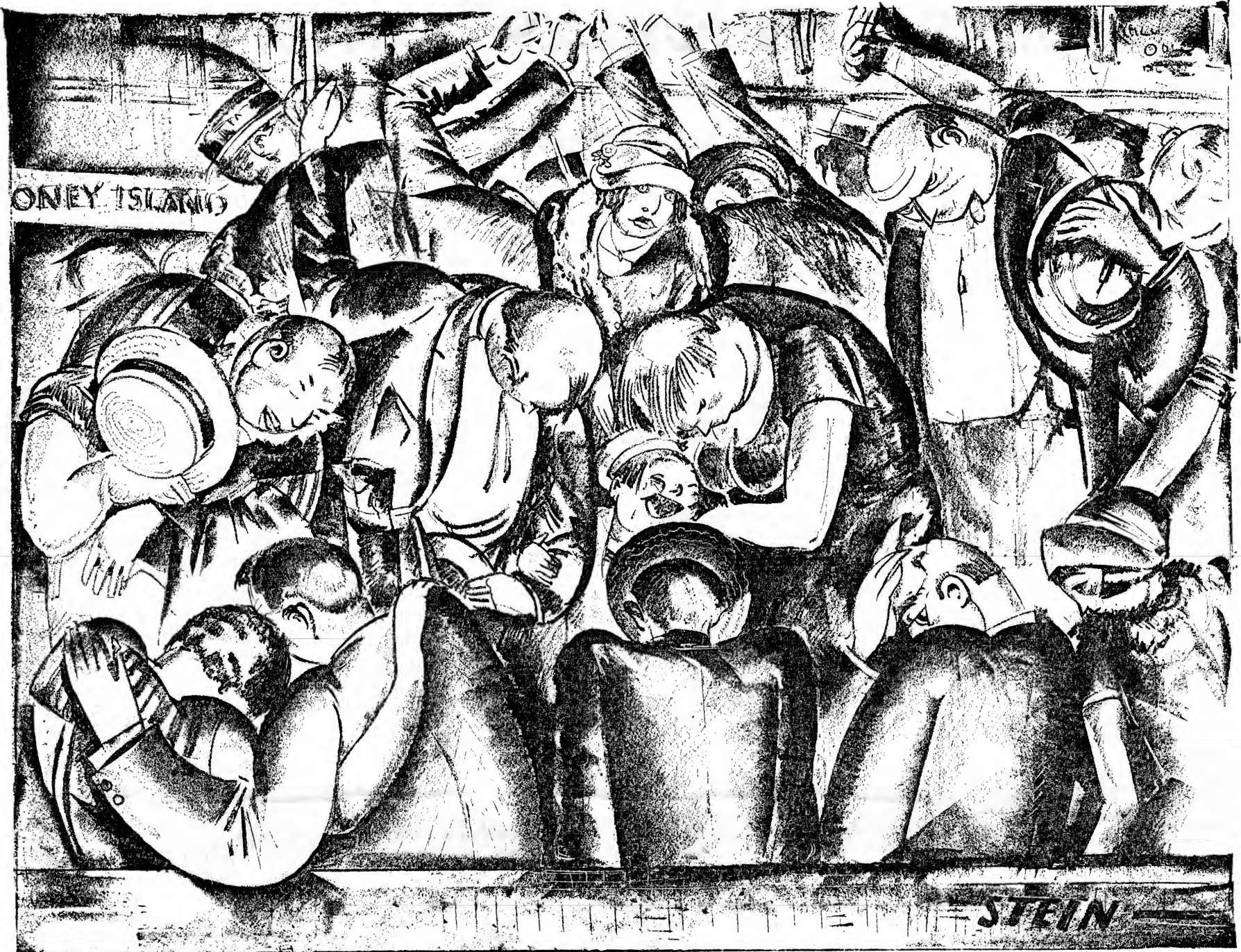
But Ed Lavin, Harry Bark, Joe Phelan and their associates were sick of this "reptile company union stuff" as Lavin called it, "this choking thing" misnamed a "Brotherhood." They made the break and 700 of their fellows followed them to Manhattan Casino and signed up in the Consolidated Railway Workers' Union of Greater New York. Later they were followed by 150 men from the motive power department lead by Jim Walsh, as well as a scattering of workers from the "L" lines and the signal towers. Such an open defiance of a company union tyranny had never been witnessed since John D. instituted his

model scheme in Colorado. Hedley's big happy family stuff seemed to be leaking. It was an anxious hour for the transit monarchs.

They determined to crush these Spartici and all their followers regardless of cost. Ultimatums, refusals to arbitrate anything with anybody, damage suits, injunction threats, the Industrial Squad, spies, shooflies, beakies, finks, pluguglies, blacklists, piled on each other's heels as the I. R. T. drove one smashing blow after another at the workers' new union. Mr. Hedley moved to take the strikers' property, impound their unpaid wages, send them "up the river." The local politicians contributed the Industrial Gangster Bomb Squad for thirty of the most brutal minutes ever witnessed in a civilized country since the Tsar of all the Russias toppled. Even the dirty tabloid sheets gasped in amazement and shouted "This is Not Passaic!" But the organized violence of the state had done its bit and the blackjack had contributed its part to the unseemly farce of company union strike-breaking.

Mr. Hedley and Mr. Quackenbush, always truculent, boastful and autocratic were using precisely the same





PLEASURE BENT

DRAWING BY STEIN

forces, and even the very phrases, they had used in 1916. "Let me warn you that the course of the company ten years ago will be its course this year." Again it was the old story: "I will not meet the men as an organization but only as individuals. Motorman Lavin, not President Lavin." Hedley had remarked in the 1916 strike that he would spend money like a drunken sailor to smash a strike and prevent real trade union collective bargaining. Then he had sent spies as far west as San Francisco to frame up letters attempting to discredit Bill Mahon. He was just as lavish in 1926. The criminals and "green men" who tried to run the trains received the sum of \$1 an hour 24 hours a day. During the weeks that preceded the strike, Quackenbush attended all the important meetings of the Brotherhood and practically dictated its policies, including the order suspending all meetings during the strike.

That union was not strong enough, those men were not experienced enough to stand up under such a fire. Those earnest and sweet-hearted liberals who like to tell us about the experience and training gained by workers under company unionism should have been close to this scene instead of at their summer homes. They would have seen as helpless a group of robots as were ever produced by welfare-paternalism in the machine age. A blind, stubborn, splendid, good-natured, unorganized, buoyant, blundering revolt of those who for ten years had been blinded and bankrupted by company unionism at its worst. A concrete lesson in the "industrial self-government" the personnel managers and experts have been preaching about. Here was a good opportunity to observe the "functional freedom and responsibility" extolled by the proponents of "employee representation." The company propaganda and strike-wrecking machine hit on all cylinders as it drove upon the workers and made splinters of their solidarity. The workers in revolt simply had no machine. They halted and turned and groped and eagerly accepted advice from all and sundry. They fought with both hands tied behind them but they fought magnificently considering the psychological bonds that had bound them to "the company." But the muscles of "freedom and responsibility" had not been exercised. They were flabby, unskilled, helpless, inept.

But the workers could tell their story to those who asked them about the company union peonage. They turned some light on the conditions out of which they had torn themselves if only for a moment. They told of the discharge and the blacklisting of workers who had dared to raise their voices against the company and the tools on the "Brotherhood" staff. They told of workers suppressed and hounded and spied upon for having ideas about more wages, shorter hours and human freedom.

The strike proved all that the strikers said about the company union officials. Connolly, the President, forbade the workers to hold meetings during the course of the conflict, ordered the police to break up meetings of the few who had the courage to meet, parroted the words of Hedley and the I. R. T. publicity department, reported to 165

Broadway the names of workers caught distributing circulars, dispatched spies to watch all gatherings and to report to the company those who proved "disloyal"; he even checked off for discharge workers showing sympathy with the strikers. He diligently cultivated "company morale."

And what a background of "cultivation" on which to build this strike-breaking machine. Consider some of the elements in the shaping of workers' loyalty channels during the last decade. One gets the picture by glancing over the *Interborough Bulletin*, founded in 1910, circulation 18,000, free to every worker, distributed by company guards at the terminals. In the back issues of this journal one begins to understand the factors in the game of "selling" the company to the employees. We pick items at random:—

"Evidence of the great work done by the I. R. T. Brotherhood may be seen in the various communications received by its President, Mr. P. J. Connolly." One is a letter from a worker thanking the boss of the union for getting him a job in the 129th Street shops of the corporation. Such service, performed by a regular trade union, would be "all in the day's work," but Mr. Hedley, under those conditions, would call it "agitation by outsiders."

On another page called "Brotherhood Notes," written by a gent who signs himself "Jocund," we find that Mr. Connolly is in receipt of a postal card of thanks from a widow, which is all very splendid and convincing "union

activity," and perhaps more useful than attending complimentary dinners for President Hedley at the Hotel Commodore—a company union delegate's reluctant duty!

A letter from the delegates of Local 9 announcing that they are again running for office and warning their constituents:

"Do not be swayed by the opinion of some one who may have expressed a misconstrued idea of some delegate, for we must realize if God cannot satisfy everybody then, therefore, we as men who are only mortal beings surely cannot overcome the wisdom of our Supreme Ruler. . . . Again thanking you for your past favors and trusting to be of service to you for another term, we remain."

After certain delegates to the company union are thus permitted the pages of the *Bulletin* to blame their mistakes on God and to ask for another term they usually get elected and come back with a letter of thanks after the ballots are counted. One of them "desires to thank all his fellow workers for their hearty cooperation and support and for the vim and eagerness they showed in standing by him."

In between the election notices, pictures by the hundreds. Of babies—the "finest on earth"—of brides and delegates and soldier boys and harmonica players. Every employee must at sometime have his picture appear in the company magazine under such happy titles as *Girls Take Notice*, *A Ladies Man*, *Has Passed Away*, *Likes*

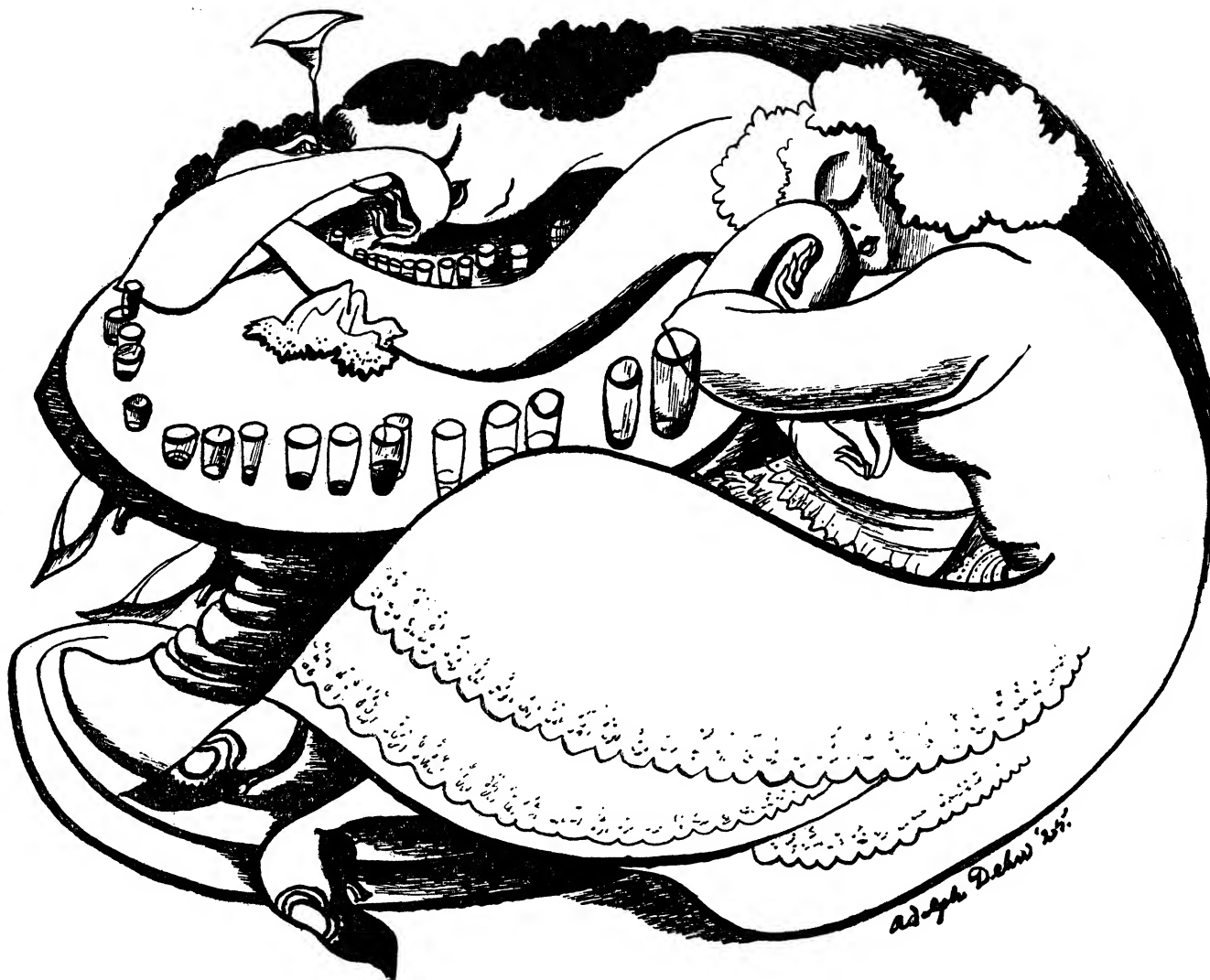
*His Job*, *Loves the Interborough*, *Some Picture*, *Faithful Employees*, *They're Married Now*, *Well, Well, Well*, *Enjoying a Pension*, *Oh Girls Look*, *Likes His Bulletin*, *Girls*, *He's Out Agin*, *Subway Agent Draws Triplets*, *Anyone Love Me*, *Caught in the Act*, *All Smiles*, *Hey There We See You*, and commonest of all *A Beau Brummel*. (God, what a lot of these there are in the *Interborough* service.) And if we can't get your picture, boys, we'll insert your name. "Before the year is over we should like to see the name of every employee appear in the *Bulletin* and are sure you would like it too."

Headline: "Thank President Hedley for Santa Claus Contest Prizes," with a picture of the handsomest infant prize winner and a personal letter to the child from Frank himself. (Hedley once remarked, "I'll go the limit on this welfare work.") Also a letter of approval from the New York Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution on the assistance given by the company in the celebration of Constitution Day, especially through the sentiments expressed in the *Subway Sun*, the "wall newspaper" of the I. R. T. management.

Editorial observations of the *Bulletin* are always penetrating. One of them on the occasion of the death of the late Harding:

"Surely this is a land of astonishing opportunity for the workingman"

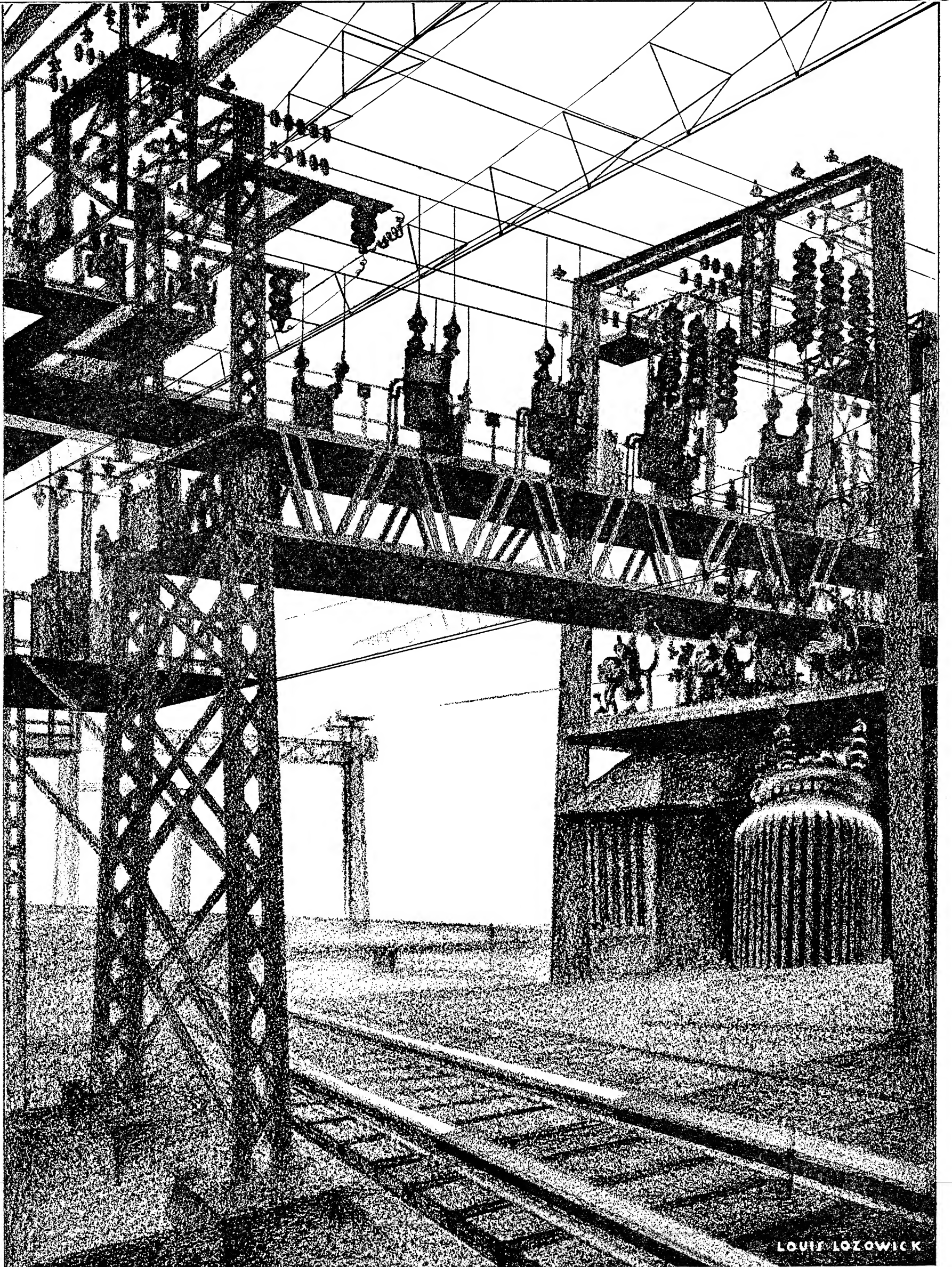
What? Even under the yellow dog?  
(Continued on page 29)



PROCESSIONAL

DRAWING BY ADOLPH DEHN



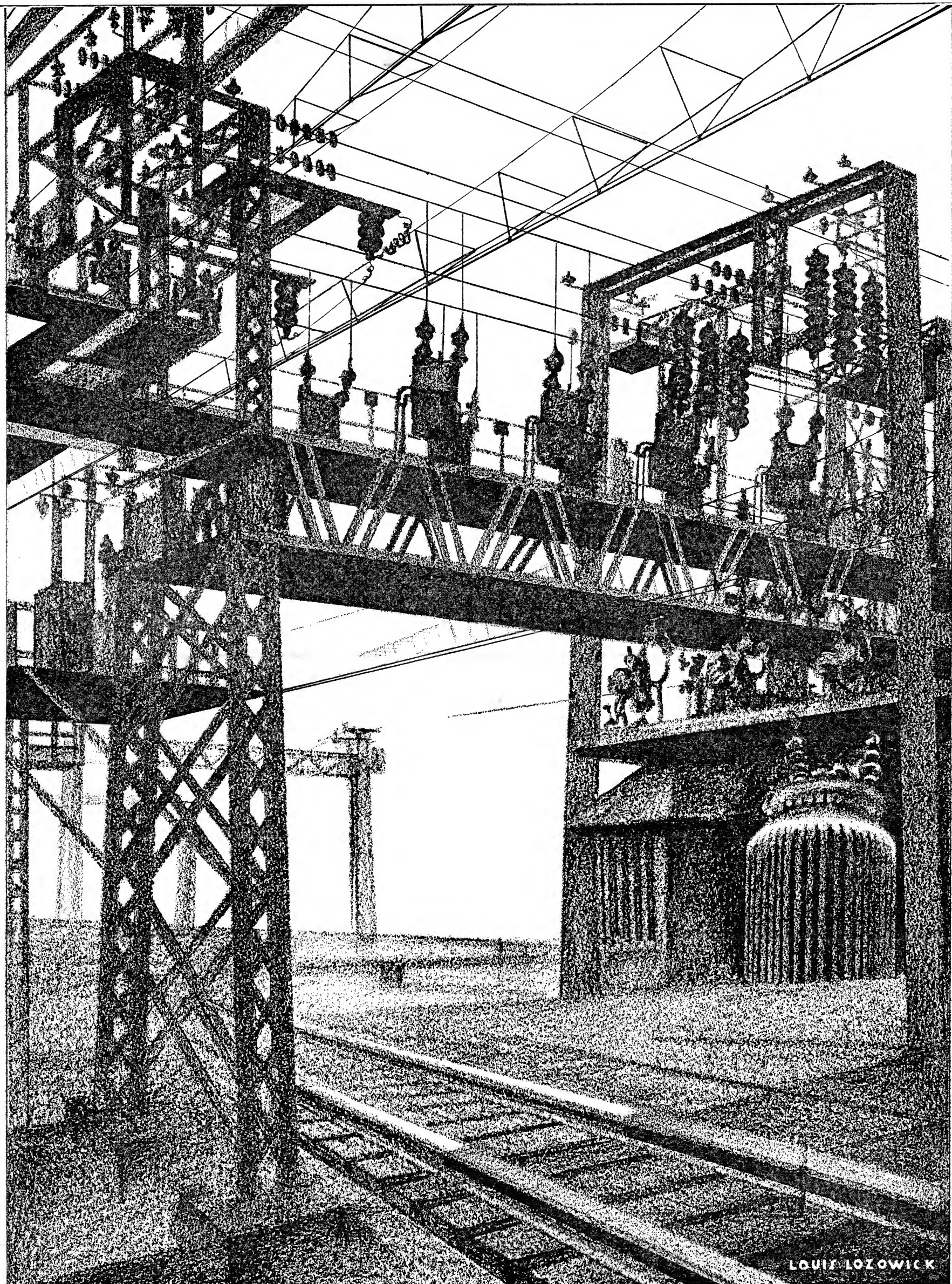


LOUIS LOZOWICK

HIGH VOLTAGE

DRAWING BY LOUIS LOZOWICK





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# BERTIE :: A STORY

By IVAN BEEDE

IT was a sad summer evening, and Bertie was susceptible to sadness. He was standing in front of Merrick's restaurant, watching the red sky, feeling lonely and blue.

There was a quality of eternal sorrow about the earth, exhausted after the long siege of the sun, waiting for night. As yet there was no trace of night even on the far edge of the prairie, but he could feel it, he could hear it, murmuring in the distance like a sea. When it came it would be overwhelming.

Bertie had just eaten supper in the restaurant, alone. He usually ate by himself; people, for some unspecified reason, felt uncomfortable when seen in the company of Bertie. There had been nothing else to do after supper, and he had stopped in front of the store to stare at the sky.

He placed himself at the curb, so that he would not see those passing behind him. If he were looking at them they would glance at his lily-like form with a wise smile and say, "Hello there Bertie."

They made Bertie tired. The more they grinned through the years, the more he prinked and preened. He swore he despised them and tried to be as different from them as he could. He lived alone in a pink house with lace curtains where he had his own world: his dairy, his flowers, his maltese cat and his dreams. Only one person in Greeley he cared for; as for the others, the Germans could blow up the town; he wouldn't mind.

Although he did not look at the passersby he could hear them talking as they sauntered along. The voices had a sad sound, even in laughter, and seemed to possess lives of their own. People walked on and left voices lingering there.

One he distinguished from the rest, the voice he would have known anywhere—in Madagascar, or China. Paul Moon was passing, somebody had stopped to talk to him in the street. "What's this I hear, you're going to war?"

Bertie didn't know who was speaking to Paul, he didn't even turn round to see. He kept looking at the red sky while the words hung there outside his ears.

A minute later, on the other side of the square, he could see Paul swinging along in his shirtsleeves, a cap far back on his head. So Paul was going to war. The news fell on his mood like an angelus, making him feel more than ever fateful and sad.

Paul was no more Bertie's friend than anyone else, but Bertie had the habit of dreaming he was. It was the way Bertie found compensation. In spite of the loneliness of his life he could afford to look down on the rest of the town, because of his dreams about Paul.

He took it for granted that they would one day be friends, and often pictured how it would happen. It would begin with a misty confession to Paul, in which he would twist his

mouth up in a pained smile and tell Paul what a funny fellow he was. Paul would listen with a compassionate light in his eyes, a regard like that of Jesus, and then he would say something or other like this: "I understand. We are different, as different as the sun is from clouds, but we can be friends."

Whenever people got snotty, or he felt particularly useless, Bertie would decide the time had come to make some advance. He would plan to invite Paul out to see his pictures, or set a Sunday afternoon to drive up to the Moons. But when the moment arrived, he always held back.

Now as he stood there he saw Paul returning, walking into his mood. The sad evening, the sad news, were too much for Bertie. It was like the clicking of fate; and he could not stifle the impulse to speak.

"Hello, Paul."

"Hello there Bertie."

"I hear you're leaving us, Paul. When?"

"A couple of days I guess, Bertie. I got a chance to go direct to flying school."

"A couple of days. Then maybe I won't see you again?"

"I guess I'll be around: I don't know."

"Listen Paul."

"Yes?"

"I got my Brown Betsy here. Suppose we hop on and ride. Get out and find a breath of fresh air."

Paul was surveying him coolly. "Now what is Bertie up to, I wonder?" he seemed to be saying.

He looked sublimely secure, like a knight in shining armour, and let his hands rest lightly on his hips a moment, as if testing his strength.

"Oh, all right," he said.

Bertie did not lose any time. He opened the door of his Ford truck for Paul to enter, than ran around and jumped in at the steering wheel.

They cleared the town and got on

a wide stretch of road that led to the valley. Grasshoppers and crickets and bullfrogs were singing, and in the west, where there was still an afterglow, a great star shone like a Christmas candle.

Bertie placed his straw hat primly between them, and let the breeze stir his sparse hair.

"Paul, do you know the poem,

*As beautiful as any star*

*When only one is in the sky?"*

"No. Who wrote it?"

"I'm mortally ashamed to say I don't know. I'm not much of a reader, and didn't get beyond the tenth grade: papa died, you know, and I had to go to work. But it's nice, don't you think?"

"Yes, I like it."

"Somebody said it to me once."

"Was she good-looking?"

"Yes," said Bertie, and blushed.

He turned his head to look across the open fields to the west, over miles and miles of corn. The stalks were breast high; they seemed happy and alert, whispering to one another. All around night was rolling in like a sea. Bertie sighed happily.

"When you go away, Paul, you'll learn a lot of things."

"About what, exactly?"

"Oh, lots of things. Somewhere, in the army or out, you'll meet people who know something about life. That's what these farmers don't seem to realize, Paul, that everybody isn't alike. It takes all kinds of people to make up a world, you know."

"I know," grinned Paul. "'Everybody to his own taste,' said the old lady as she kissed the cow."

A red Harvest moon began to lumber over the fringe of trees to the east.

"Look Paul."

"It's only the moon."

"I know, but how wonderful it looks. There is something great about tonight, and sad. Do you know why? Because you're going away—you and everybody else." He giggled.

"Doesn't the moon look sad to you, or am I a nannygoat?"

Paul made sure where the moon was, and turned in the opposite direction.

"I'm only joking," laughed Bertie. "But I like to say things like that. I like to talk sometimes, and let go." He breathed deeply, and looked around. "And I guess this is one of the times. I'm only an old woman, and have to talk or go crazy, so please don't mind."

Paul was silent.

"I don't believe you do mind, Paul. Somehow I feel I can talk to you. You're not like the rest of the folk in this town. You're different."

"I'm different?" Paul demanded sharply. "What do you mean?"

"Oh, you got some sense," Bertie answered, discouraged. "You weren't meant to be one of these small-town men. I suppose you won't believe it, but it's true. I've been watching you, Paul. You've got brains, and things. The good Lord meant you to be bigger than these people."

He waited for Paul to say something, but Paul remained silent. He felt the situation slipping out of his hands, and became desperate all of a sudden.

"I know what you think, Paul. I know what everybody thinks, that I'm . . . well, I'm not."

He clutched the wheel tightly with his white hands. He had expected to tell Paul the truth, and was lying. Why? Usually fear made him lie; he didn't want anybody to have anything on him; but in this case it was not that. It was because he wanted Paul to like him, no matter what. Paul simply had to like him, even if he lied until he was black in the face.

Perhaps he had better lie some more.

"Listen. I'll tell you something, Paul, something I've never told anybody. I'll tell you what's the matter with me. Do you remember Bill Marvin and Hank Garhan?"

"I've heard of them."

"They were a good deal older than me, but I went to Omaha with them once. They got drunk and took me down to Capitol Avenue, to a place full of negroes. Blue women in pink kimono. They were all fat, and insisted on hugging me. They smelled—awful."

He waited. There was not even a grunt out of Paul.

"Then something else happened. When we were going home one of the women got sick. She was so sick she turned white, I'm not joking. It was my woman. When I asked her what was the matter, she said we were going to have a baby."

Paul eased out his legs and laughed.

"You didn't believe her?"

"Of course not. That is, I knew she wasn't, right then. But I didn't know what to believe; I was only a kid."

Paul looked at Bertie curiously.

"Well, it was a tough break, I admit. But I wouldn't let it bother me now. I know it would never phase me."

## MESSAGE TO SIBERIA

Deep in the Siberian mine,  
Keep your patience proud;  
The bitter toil shall not be lost,  
The rebel thought unbowed.

The sister of misfortune, Hope,  
In the under-darkness dumb,  
Speaks joyful courage to your heart:  
The day desired will come.

And love and friendship pour to you  
Across the darkened doors,  
Even as round your galley-beds  
My free music pours.

The heavy-hanging chains will fall,  
The walls will crumble at a word;  
And Freedom greet you in the light,  
And brothers give you back the sword.

Translated by Max Eastman

Alexander Pushkin





DRAWING BY I. KLEIN

"NOW THAT WE'RE PAID UP ON THE FURNITURE. DO YOU THINK WE CAN AFFORD TO HAVE A BABY?"  
 "ON THE INSTALLMENT PLAN. EH?"

Bertie sighed unhappily.

"'Everybody to his own taste,' said the old lady as she kissed the cow."

It seemed everything he said made things worse, but he couldn't quit now. He longed more than ever to be understood.

He slowed the car down to a stop, and shut off the engine.

"It's late," said Paul, "I've got to get home."

"I know. But let's sit here a minute, in the breeze, and talk. It's cool here, Paul. . . You can't imagine how awful it was. You're not like me, so you can't understand, unless you try. It changed my whole life, or I think so sometimes. Other times I guess I was made like I am. Anyway, what is the difference, how it happened?"

He fidgeted in his seat, talking faster.

"I'll tell you something, Paul, I don't care whether you like it or not. You look at people here and in Lincoln and think they're the world, and try to make yourself like they are. That's all right, I wouldn't change you if I could, but it happens I'm different. I want to be different. And clean. I take a bath twice a day. . .

"I suppose you're laughing. You're

not, are you? Don't laugh. I'm talking to you straight, telling you everything. I want you to understand. You don't know about life, Paul, you think you do, but you don't. This isn't all there is to it, what you see here. There's something else besides that, there must be. Understanding and forgiving, I mean. You and me, for example, Paul. Understanding one another, forgiving one another, being. . . just friends."

There was only silence from Paul. It was awful. Bertie felt he was bursting. He had to say everything on his mind, though he knew all the time he was getting in deeper and deeper. Wild thoughts rushed to his lips. He was on the point of confessing that above his bed, draped with two tiny flags, was a photograph of Paul, clipped from the high school annual.

Some instinct saved him from that. He sputtered instead. Then panic seized him.

"Paul, for Heaven's sake, say something. You do know what I mean, don't you?"

His hand shot out and touched Paul pleadingly on the shoulder.

"Yes, I know what you mean,"

Paul said, and leaning away a little so he would have room, socked Bertie in the jaw.

Partly from the force of the blow, partly because he was rising to escape it, Bertie flopped over the side of the car like a knife in mumbledy-peg and struck the road with a dull sound. He alighted on his shoulder, then eased over on his back, and lay still.

Paul got out of his side of the car and started back to town.

Bertie heard the footsteps falling on the dusty road; he heard the grasshoppers and crickets and bullfrogs. Over the car's side he could see the rounding moon. All the time he was thinking fast. He was not angry; somewhere inside he was hurt, but he did not have time for that. That was all over, his foolish dreams. He was queer, and he knew it. But if Paul was mad, if he told—lies! Stupid lies! They would have something on him then. They would chase him out of town.

"Paul! Paul! Please come here."

He scrambled to his feet, holding on to the door of the truck.

Paul hesitated, then stopped. He did not like the idea of walking all the way back to town. Besides, he wasn't afraid.

He returned to the truck, swinging his arms free.

"Drive me back to town."

Bertie dusted himself off and climbed in. Paul cleared imaginary coat tails and sat very far over on his side.

"Paul," said Bertie, leaning low over the steering wheel, "promise me you won't say anything. Promise me that. You know I meant nothing wrong."

Paul looked masterfully over the moonlit fields.

"About that I will do as I please. I can't promise anything. But I trust. . . I have some sense of decency."

"I trust," whispered Bertie. "I trust, I trust, I trust."

He did not dare say any more, or look in the direction of Paul. His body was trembling, and he had difficulty in driving the truck. Other cars came along, their headlights glaring monstrously, and Bertie skimmed the cool fringe of the road, to give them plenty of room. They dipped down in chill gullies, they fled up again. Dogs barked, and shadows marched through the corn.

At last they entered the limits of  
 (Continued on page 30)



DRAWING BY I. KLEIN

"NOW THAT WE'RE PAID UP ON THE FURNITURE. DO YOU THINK WE CAN AFFORD TO HAVE A BABY?"  
"ON THE INSTALLMENT PLAN. EH?"



# FIVE POEMS

By KENNETH FEARING

## ST. AGNES EVE

The dramatis personae include a fly-specked Monday evening,  
A cigar store with stagnant windows,  
Two crooked streets,  
Six policemen, and Louie Glatz.

Deep drums mumble and mutter an ominous portent as Louie Glatz  
Holds up the cigar store and backs out with

\$14.93

Officer Dolan noticed something suspicious (it is supposed), and  
ordered him to halt,  
But dangerous, handsome, cross-eye'd Louie the Rat

Spoke with his gat  
rat-a-tat-tat  
rat-a-tat-tat  
and Dolan was buried as quickly as possible.

But Louie didn't give a good God damn.  
He ran like a crazy shadow on a shadowy street  
With five policemen off that beat  
Hot on his trail, going Blam!

Blam-blam! while  
rat-a-tat-tat  
rat-a-tat-tat  
said Louie's gat

So loud that Peter Wendotti rolled away from his wife, got out of bed  
To scratch his stomach and shiver on the cold floor,  
Listening to the stammering syllables of instant death  
Met on secret floors in the big marble warehouse of night.

Then Louie sagged, and fell, and ran.  
With seven bullets through his caved-in skull, and those feeble  
brains  
Spilling out like soup,  
He crawled behind a water-hydrant and stood them off for  
another half minute.

"I'm not shot," he yelled, "I'm not shot," he screamed,  
"It isn't me they've shot in the head," he laughed, "Oh

I don't give a damn!"  
And rat-a-tat-tat  
rat-a-tat-tat  
muttered the gat  
of Louie the Rat,  
while the officers of the law went Blam! Blam-blam!

Soft music. Violins moan like weeds swaying far under water.  
The vibrant throats of steamships hoot a sad defiance at distance  
and nothing.  
Space curls its arm across the flat roofs and dreary streets.  
Bricks bulge, and sag.

Louie's soul arose through his mouth in the form of a derby hat  
That danced with cigarette butts and burned matches and specks  
of dust  
Where Louie lay.  
Close-up of Dolan's widow. Of Louie's mother.  
Picture of the fly-specked Monday evening, and fade out slow.

## J A K E

Too bad for her, with the kids and all.  
(Certainly is), and the room's too small  
For all those undertaker chairs.  
(The choir had to sit on the stairs.)  
Jake's played his last ace, finished the race,  
Lilies for Jake and a harp to play.  
We all must come to it some day. (Hey?)  
Last Saturday Jake was roaring tight.  
Goodbye (forever) old poker face,  
See you at Joe's next Saturday night.

## DEATH AND TRANSFIGURATION OF FOURTEENTH STREET

Fourteenth street, with a bad cold in its head  
Lay in a back bedroom on Fourteenth street,  
Not counting the rheumy flies that nailed the years  
Speck upon speck to the walls overhead,  
Not listening, dully, to the sleet, sleet, sleet  
Of noise it had somehow sired by hoofs and gears  
Drumming the xylophones of its deep stones,  
Not knowing that Fourteenth street would abruptly stop  
When Murray opened his radio shop.

Tenderly over the corpse of Union Square  
Murray's loud-speaker blats professional woe.  
The malign, anemic whoop of Fourteenth street  
Chokes sickly on the opera-tainted air,  
Laocoon to the hugely brooding flow  
Of stuffed serpents, too glistening, and sweet.  
The toil of many flies is snow-capped, and done . . .  
The angels weep while Murray, in the mist,  
Paddles the pants of Fourteenth street with Liszt.

## BALLADE OF THE SALVATION ARMY

On Fourteenth street the bugles blow,  
Bugles blow, bugles blow.  
The red, red, red, red banner floats  
Where sweating angels split their throats  
Marching in burlap petticoats,  
Blow, bugles, blow.

God is a ten car Bronx Express,  
Red eyes round, red eyes round.  
"Oh where is my lustful lamb tonight,  
His hair slicked down and his trousers tight?  
I'll grind him back to my glory light."  
Roll, subway, roll.

Heaven is a free amusement park,  
Big gold dome, big gold dome.  
Movies at night: "The Life She Led."  
Everyone sleeps in one big bed.  
The stars whirl around and around your head.  
Home, home, home.

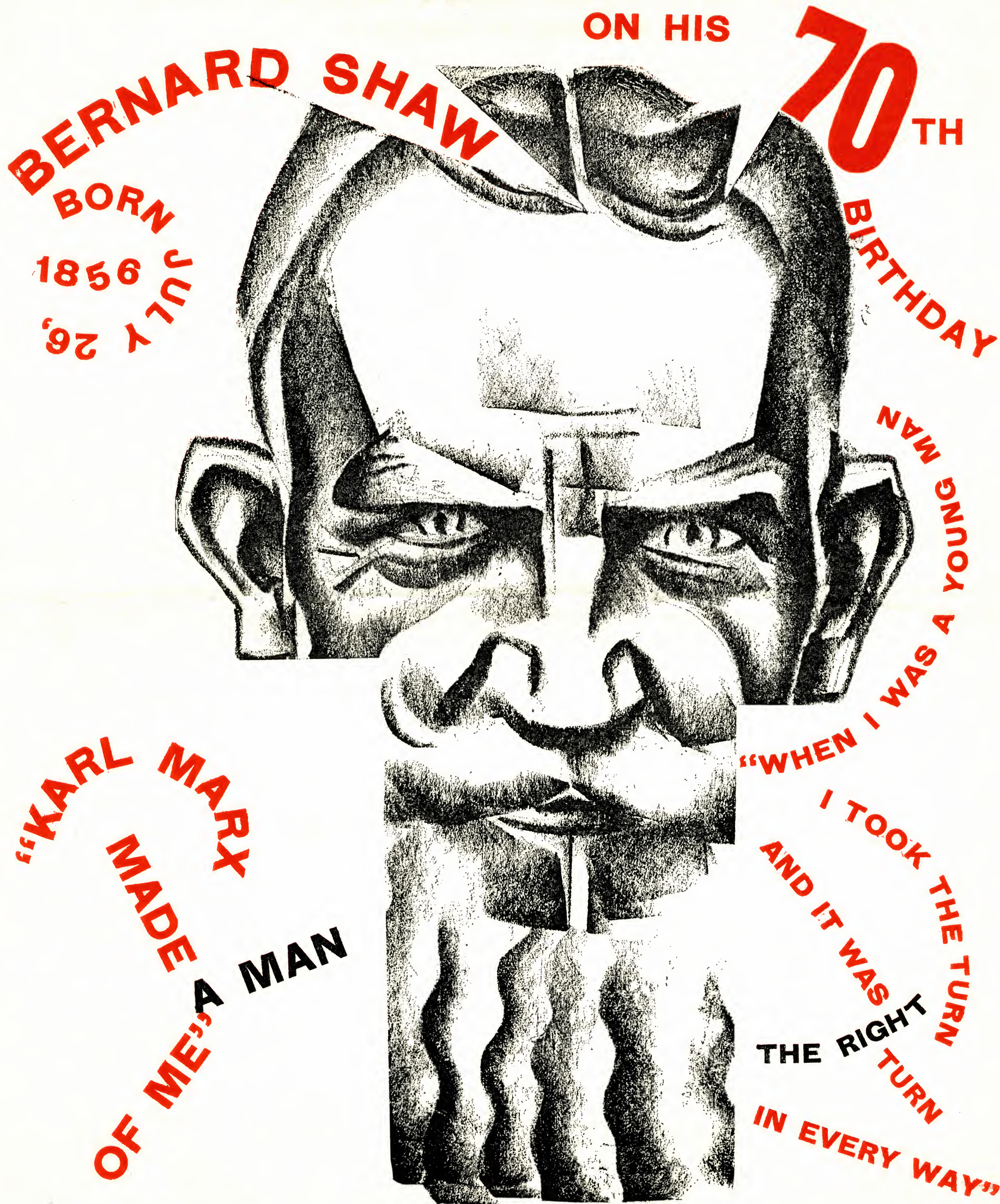
On Fourteenth street the bugles blow,  
Bugles blow, bugles blow.  
The torpid stones and pavements wake,  
A million men and street-cars quake  
In time with angel breasts that shake,  
Blow, bugles, blow.

## REVEILLE—7th AVENUE

They tremble in the morning eye  
Like people walking on a blade.  
They bounce in barrels or lean from windows  
And bay out at the cavalcade.

None of their faces were cooked enough,  
Save their eyes, grimed by a single scorch.  
They shrink from the sun's adroit rapier,  
And the smoky street, a crackling torch.







# DIARY OF THE BRITISH STRIKE\*

By RAYMOND W. POSTGATE

**M**AY 1st, Anyway, this is the most astonishing of all May Days. Went down to the Embankment to the procession. We found it standing about and waiting orders all the way from Savoy Street to Blackfriars. A charabanc load of Fascists passed at high speed, in black shirts. They were singing something which made a thin piping noise—some people said it was *Rule Britannia*, some the Italian hymn *Giovinezza*. They disappeared amid jeers. Afterwards I heard a few of them got roughly handled when they attempted to seize a banner.

2.30: Still waiting for the signal to march. Banners and carts ceaselessly pour in from Blackfriars. Edgar Lansbury is rushing along the line telling the people something.

They say that what Edgar was saying was that the T. U. C. has called a general strike. I have been up to Bouverie Street, but you cannot get a *Star* or *News* at all. The procession has started and is slowly dragging forward, but no one knows the truth. Eric Lansbury shows me a *Standard*. "There's no news in it." I turn it over to see the stop-press: "General Strike Called: The Trades Union Congress has called a general strike." That's all. Enough, too. But not enough. When is it called for?

The procession is enormous. We are somewhere near the middle, I suppose. We can't see either the end or the beginning. It is an unending vista of red banners, black banners, gold banners, picture banners, flapping heavily in the wind. The crowd is fairly friendly till Oxford Street, where there is a four and five deep rank of plump looking men, whores, and non-descripts, who scowl at us. A weak and skinny bearded man boos, but he is drowned in a roar of laughter. I have got a paper:—Strike called for Monday midnight: Transport, Railways, Printers, Builders, Iron and Steel Trades . . . Bevin's speech is straightforward and determined: unlike his usual style. The T. U. C. will aid in every way the distribution of food. It sounds as though they meant business.

The procession at last got through to the Park. One feels a little puzzled and astonished: I, at least, doubt whether it will really come off. But all the odds are that it will. Joynson-Hicks and Churchill are obviously in control and want a fight. I met Francis Meynell, who jeered at the possibility of the Congress showing fight. But he withdrew when he saw the paper.

We went home early. Noticed that the police have obviously received orders to be on their best behaviour. Wired G. L. [George Lansbury] to come back from Newton Abbot.

We spent the evening at Ernest Thurtle's. He thinks Baldwin will climb down on Monday. But we did

not discuss the matter long, for we all know nothing. We played bridge.

What a May Day!

**Sunday May 2nd.** The Sunday papers tell us no more. The Cabinet and the T. U. C. General Council are again negotiating. But how can even Jimmy Thomas find a formula—short of plain treachery? After writing continually to urge the workers to stand together—wondering whether they will ever be determined enough for a general strike—has it come at last? And what the devil will it be like? Has Eccleston Square any plans? enough guts? It is like asking for an elephant or a dragon, not expecting to receive it, and, lo, here it is walking up the garden path.

Went down to Bow, to cheer up Mrs. L. and hear the wireless. No settlement yet, it says.

**Monday May 3rd.** Still no settlement. I am sending down the usual copy to the printers, mechanically. I think it will be no use. Rang up the *Journalists' Union*; it says—keep on with usual work only, until further orders come from the Emergency Committee meeting tonight. Work becomes impossible during the afternoon. *Still no settlement.* Daisy arranged for us to spend the night with Kath and Mark Starr at Victoria to be near if necessary. Six o'clock: *still no news.* We shall stay at the Starrs. After dinner, we went to the House of Commons, to see G. L. Brockway was there. He says the *Mirror* and *Sketch* have been stopped. The *Daily Mail* was stopped this morning, by the Natsopa [a printing union] because they would not print a violent anti-Labour appeal. He says the *Mail* is running with a black-leg staff. G. L. comes out: he says Thomas is almost in collapse. He is making frantic efforts, with Henderson and MacDonald, to "find a formula."

They are meeting the Cabinet again. There is still no settlement.

We drift back to Starr's, and talk idly. Before long Bert Hawkins rings up from the *Sunday Worker* to say that negotiations have broken down. The strike call stands.

A little while later I was talking to Mark Starr about a book, when bells began to ring. The Abbey, the Catholic Cathedral, and other churches, I suppose. We both stopped to listen. There seemed to be an unusual silence for these midnight chimes. The general strike was on, from that minute—the first general strike call since 1842.

All night the bells disturbed me. They ring in Westminster as persistently as in Oxford.

**Tuesday May 4th.** The streets are a slow crawling mass of private cars. All sorts of curious things have been dug out. I saw one which looked like nothing but a polony on four bicycle wheels, with its works, like entrails, drooping out in front. Some news at the office: The *Mail* has not been printed. There are no papers, except those printed before midnight. The response to the strike call is magnificent. There is not a thing moving, except a few pirate buses, which circulate carefully round the West End. A dead stop. What can we do? Nothing, except keep quiet. We drift in and out of rooms and exchange gossip. Saklatvala, the Communist M. P., has been arrested for his May-day speech and is out on bail. Somebody says Sheffield is not solid. The T. U. C. will not give us a permit to come out, not to any paper. But Trades Councils, as agents of the General Council, will bring out typed sheets.

In the afternoon we go down with Eric in G. L.'s car to see Mrs. L. again. We drag through to Bow Road. There is no doubt what is happening here. Streams of people walking

home from work, a mass of private cars, and a few blackleg lorries. The "mass" pickets are jumping on the front of the lorries and pulling them up. We saw two stopped this way. They leap quite recklessly on the front and often put them out of action. One man has been badly injured doing this. The garage keeper tells us that he has been kept busy all day with broken lorries—smashed up by pierced tanks, punctured tires and so forth. The police look as nervous as cats, and no wonder. Eric Lansbury was half afraid to drive back, without a permit.

At night: the wireless is already broadcasting anti-strike propaganda—stories about the strike breaking down and so forth.

**Wednesday May 5th.** The streets are much clearer. A few pirate buses are running and a small "circular route" of old General buses. A depot of scabs is behind Electric House—we watched them go in. Some wretched down-and-outs and some arrogant young bloods in Fair-isle jumpers. The roads are slippery and this crowd will break somebody's neck when it starts driving.

Met G. L. at the office and heard news. Most of the rumours are false. G. L. has not been arrested. Four policemen have not been killed in Bow, though about twelve have been roughly handled. The East End is absolutely tied up. They are not even trying to get the roads open there. There are a few private cars and food lorries with permits running only. Several lorries were overturned, and some ostentatious private cars. The Borough Surveyor's car was burnt.

The last conversation between the Cabinet and the Labour representatives ran something like this: Churchill (as they entered)

"Have you come to withdraw the strike notices?—"

"No, we—"

"Then there is no reason to continue this discussion—"

"Do you think this is Sydney Street again?"

"I have told you we do not propose to continue the discussion."

The Government is issuing a mendacious *British Gazette*, so the T. U. C. has decided to print a *British Worker* at the *Daily Herald* office.

A few trains running on the Met and on the Central London Tube. We start walking to Hendon. The pavements are abominably tiring to the feet. All the Hampstead Tube stations are closed.

Hendon: thank goodness for a bath. After dinner, went up to the Co-op Hall. We were immediately put into an executive committee meeting, and after a while I asked whether any arrangements were made for distributing the *British Worker*. None: so they sent me across to Latham's to ring up the *Daily Herald*. The telephonist's answer was: "Mr. Postgate,

## IN SPRING

(In the Century of the Great Social Wars)

The darkness comes alike on the warehouse and factory,  
On the bridge, on the railroad yards,  
On the moving beings, the traffic-crowded streets,  
On the quiet, ploughed fields, and the single cedar-tree.

My land, my land, you are dear to me, but you  
And I have fallen into evil hands;  
And nothing can deliver us, not nobility  
Or beauty or richness of manhood or mind, but the acts we must do.

Over you, land that I love, comes the soft spring night  
Again, again. How shall I be taken,  
From what confinement shall I sit and look forth  
Thru my window, when next comes here the soft spring evening light?

When next the spring, land that I love, is deep  
On city and farm, shall I alone  
Feel thru my window-bars the warm dark deepen,  
And know that, in freedom, those without scruple or doubt, one by one, sleep?

Whittaker Chambers

\* NOTE: Some of the reports found in this diary may possibly turn out, in the end, untrue. Nevertheless, all are true in the sense that they were current and generally believed at the time.

the police are in possession of the building. That is all I may say."

Joynson-Hicks and Churchill have really broken loose! I am instructed to write a local sheet to be mimeographed tomorrow, and issued as soon as the assent of the strike committee can be got. It is to be sold round Hendon. Speak for a few minutes to the transport workers in the hall.

Home. Have written it: pretty good, I think. Nellie rings Daisy up. The *British Worker* is out! The police held on, but the paper was set and put on the machines. A big crowd gathered outside and began to look nasty, especially when the staff shouted that the paper was being printed, but they didn't know if they could get it out.

Then suddenly the police formed a line and marched off quietly. Not a word of explanation. What on earth . . . ? Were they afraid of the crowd? Has the Cabinet trodden on Joynson-Hick's face?

**Thursday May 6th.** No copies of the *British Worker* here: though there are some of the *British Gazette*. I rewrite the copy for the Hendon paper and take it up to the Co-op. Hall. I am allowed by a newsagent to have a look at his one copy of the *British Worker*. 8 pages, size of the old *Weekly Herald*. Chiefly news. Good.

Nothing to do but write this diary. It is sickening—physically sickening, for it makes you feel ill—to have to be idle at such a time.

**Friday May 7th.** In the morning we went again to the Co-op. Hall. They still have got no copy of the *British Worker*, so they are making a type-

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## NEW MASSES

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the police are in possession of the building. That is all I may say."

Joynson-Hicks and Churchill have really broken loose! I am instructed to write a local sheet to be mimeographed tomorrow, and issued as soon as the assent of the strike committee can be got. It is to be sold round Hendon. Speak for a few minutes to the transport workers in the hall.

Home. Have written it: pretty good, I think. Nellie rings Daisy up. The *British Worker* is out! The police held on, but the paper was set and put on the machines. A big crowd gathered outside and began to look nasty, especially when the staff shouted that the paper was being printed, but they didn't know if they could get it out.

Then suddenly the police formed a line and marched off quietly. Not a word of explanation. What on earth . . . ? Were they afraid of the crowd? Has the Cabinet trodden on Joynson-Hick's face?

*Thursday May 6th.* No copies of the *British Worker* here: though there are some of the *British Gazette*. I rewrite the copy for the Hendon paper and take it up to the Co-op. Hall. I am allowed by a newsagent to have a look at his one copy of the *British Worker*. 8 pages, size of the old *Weekly Herald*. Chiefly news. Good.

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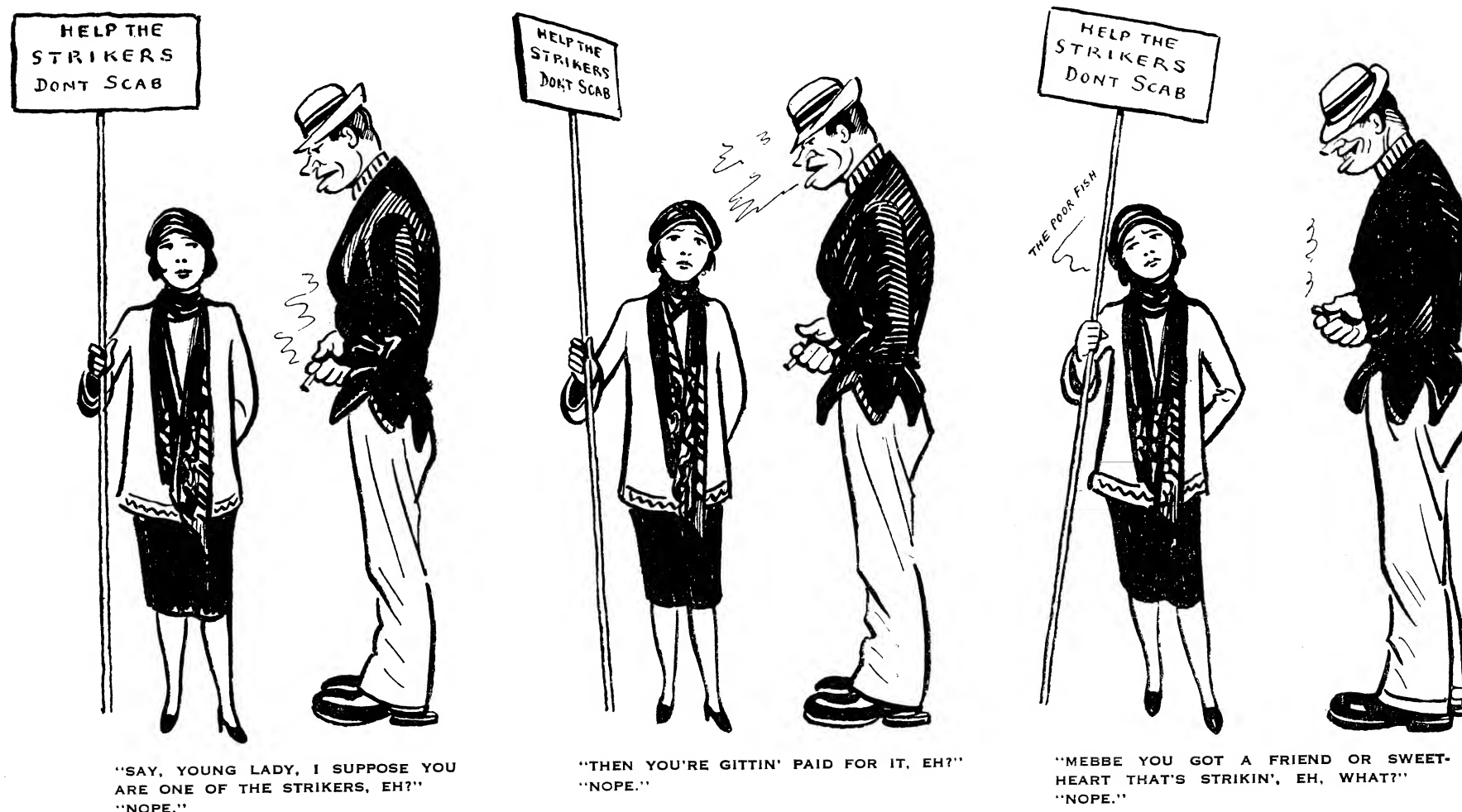
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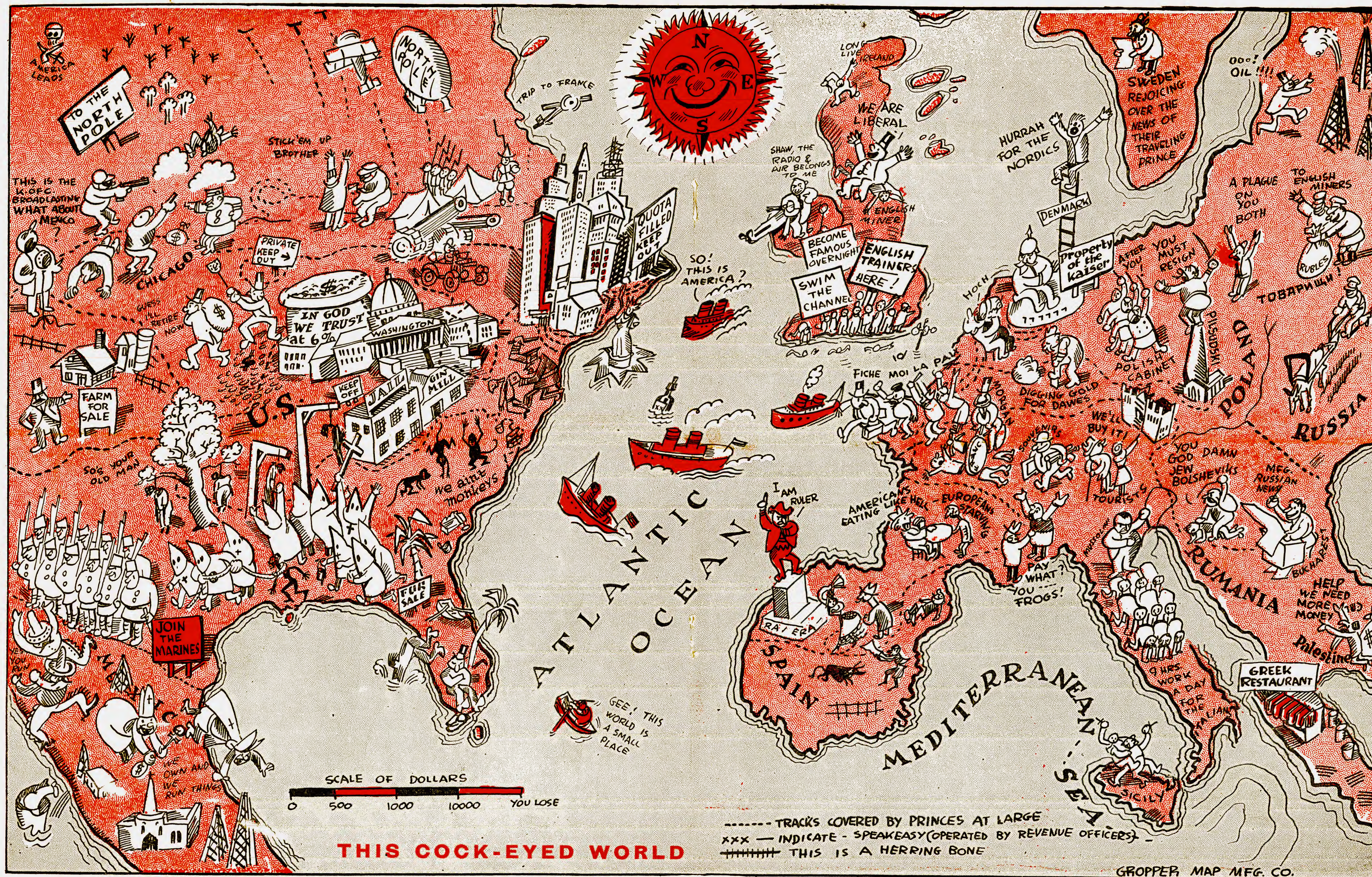


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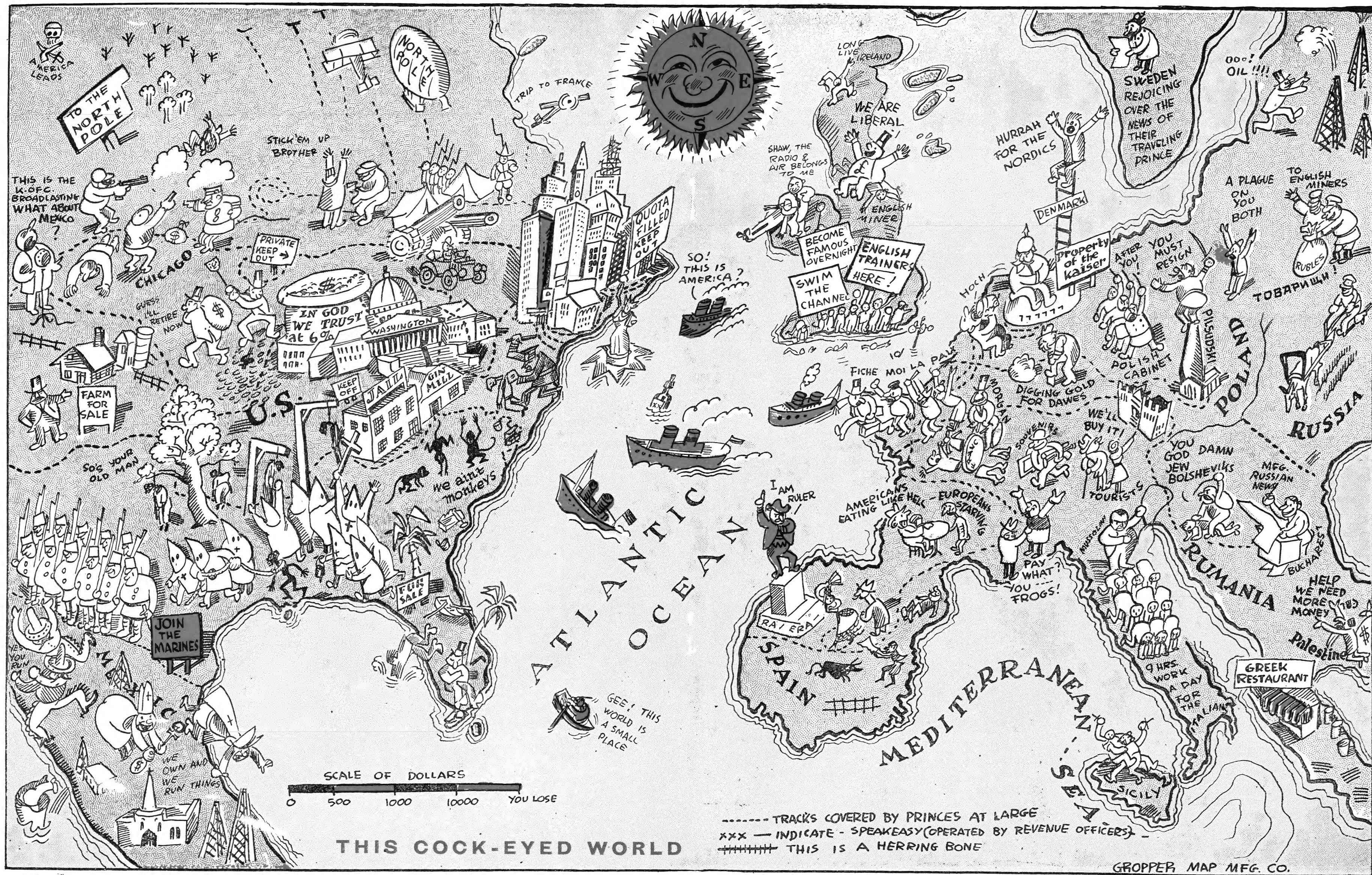
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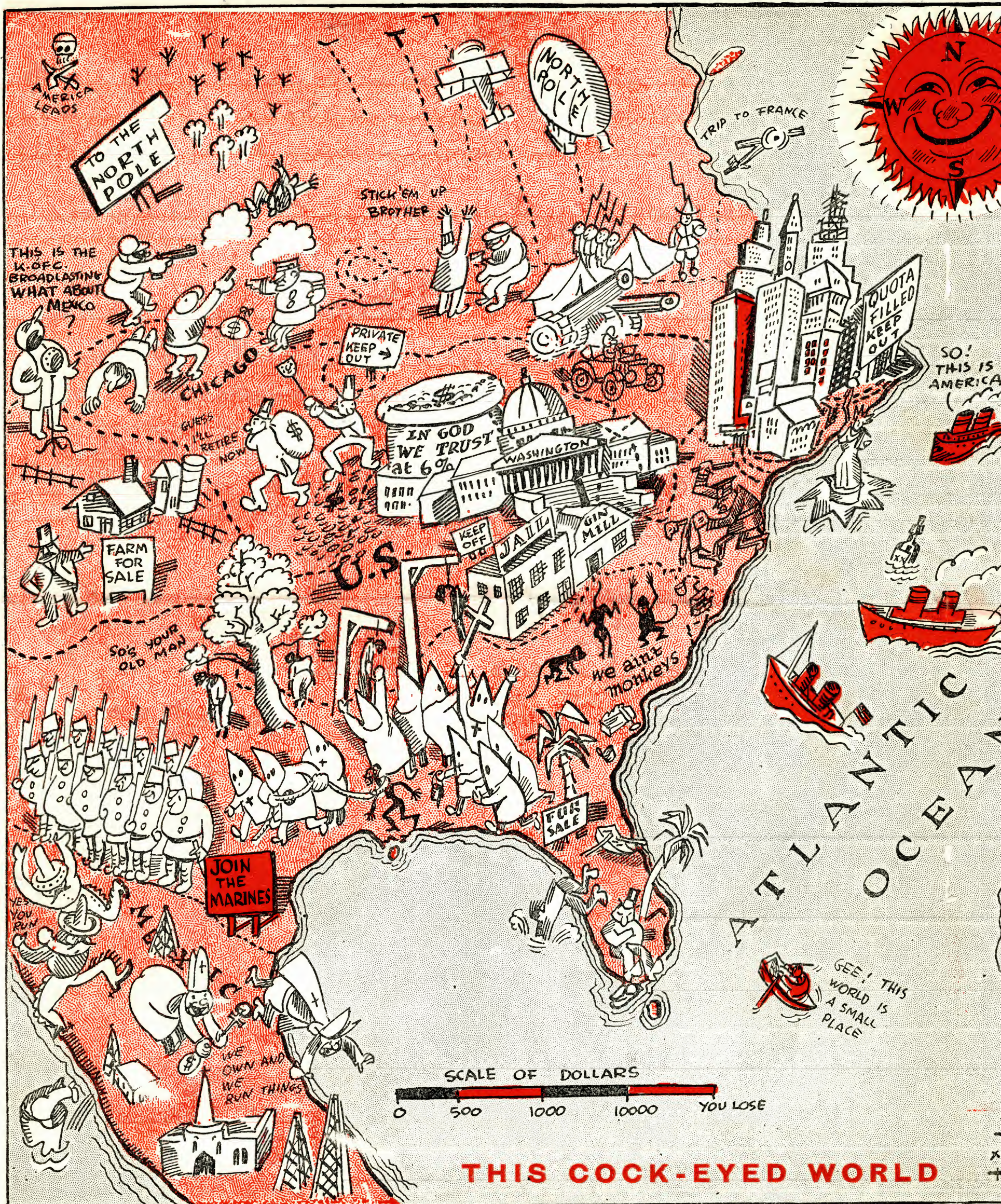


















# THE RENEGADE PEASANT

By MICHAEL KOLTSOV

Translated by Bessie Weissman

In the spring, when the supply of bread in the village begins to dwindle to crumbs; when the cattle run out of oats and are barely able to drag their legs along, instead of friskily trotting to work; when the peasants are exasperated at having to trail again over the far off plots and tracts and torn strips of land all reheded—then everybody talks about America.

In the spring, when the earth tantalizes your weak hands with thawing blue vapors, dim news worms its way into the village of the ravishing wonders of America: where the poorest peasant gets a wheat crop of two thousand poods the acre, which he harvests with his own machine; where he rides to his house in an automobile which is cleaner by far than the machine of the *uispolkom*;<sup>2</sup> where all the people live on farms. Just what a farm is is not clearly understood; but the implication is that it is cleaner than any *Sovkhoz*,<sup>3</sup> and that it can be acquired simply and easily. All one has to do is to put in a couple of years' work in a factory and pick up a little American money.

In the spring, when the peasants are cross and tired of their daily chores, and ready to listen to itinerant steamship agents, you often see how scores of farm *isbas* get together, sell their livestock and household effects for a mere trifle, and set out for a grand shakeup in the trains to Moscow. In Moscow you find them sleeping outside the entrance of the steamship company's office, waiting for the great opportunity to surrender their last kopeks for passage to America. Once in possession of steamship tickets, they stretch out in the trains to peer upon Latvia and Germany and then to vomit into the steely waves of the Atlantic, in order to land in New York and help multiply the regiments of inarticulate slaves of the American manufacturers.

On a morning when hope and anxiety in the peasant bosom alternated sighs of relief and sighs of grief, when the peasant youth of Ryzhanov Village had firmly resolved to tuck up their savings and start on their voyage across the Atlantic, a letter bearing an American stamp was received by the district soviet of Ryzhanov about their fellow-villager Kalavushka.

The letter was first read by the district leaders and then it reached the peasants. And a good thing it was that the peasants got hold of that letter; for they needed to know how the Ryzhanov peasant in America was getting on, what his life there was like, etc., particularly when they were engaged in deliberations as to how to collect the money required for delegating someone to purchase their steamship tickets for America.

The letter revealed unexpected things about Kalavushka. It read:

"We Russian fellow workers in

America hereby bring to your attention the fact that your fellow-villager and our compatriot, Andre Kalavushka, age 49, is working as a strike-breaker, or scab, as the Americans call it, in the clothing factory of Abraham Wolf. We have been striking in this shop for more than a month, and all this time we have been begging Kalavushka to stop scabbing because it is disgraceful and mean, and hurts our fight to secure better working conditions. But in spite of our entreaties, Kalavushka continues to work as a strike-breaker, being brought to the Wolf shop every day by policemen and escorted home by special guards of the capitalists and police. Kalavushka also reported many of our comrades to the boss, and one night the police swooped down upon our quarters and arrested us all. Now the judge insists that we must either pay a fine or go to jail. Many of our comrades have already served in prison and several have paid heavy fines."

The Ryzhanov peasants listened through the first part of the letter, showing great concern over the bad news about Kalavushka. They pondered a little, knitted their brows and gravely shook their thick hair.

But the Russians in America who wrote this letter; who instead of enjoying soft leather cushions in the automobiles nearly got their backs paralyzed lying in prison cells; who instead of gathering savings for a nice farm are paying fines for striking in Abraham Wolf's shop—those workers obviously expected and demanded more than a headshake from their fellow-villagers. And so the second part of the letter read like a command full of indignation:

"We have learned that Andre Kalavushka has applied for papers from the Soviet Republic to enable him to return to his native country. We therefore hasten to inform you about the vile deeds of Kalavushka in America and ask you to prevail upon the district administration to take appropriate measures for preventing him from securing a visa for the U. S. S. R. For such a vile character has no place on the territory of the free Soviet Republic. Also, we should like you to make the news about Kalavushka's abominable behavior, with respect to the working class known to the whole village of Ryzhanov, his relatives and sons, one of whom is serving in the Red Army. In the name of the Strike Committee of the City of Bridgeport, United States of America, we extend to you our fraternal greetings."

Thereupon a perfect racket of abuse started among the peasants. Finally, however, they indited a collective letter to their fellow-villager Kalavushka in America, in which they called him down severely for his shameful behavior in a foreign country, and for disgracing their village before the whole world.

When the atmosphere was clear again the peasants of Ryzhanov village pondered aloud on the significance of

such a fact; namely, that from far off America appeals for defense have to be directed to the district soviet of the Ryzhanov village. And after a great deal of noise and much spitting, the peasants decided not to buy their steamship tickets for America and buckled down to plowing their land.

## IDA AND DAVIE—A STORY

By LIBBIAN BENEDICT

"My Gawd, ain't she croaked yet?"

We all heard it because Ida had pulled the receiver away from her ear to lessen the torrent of voice.

"Go to hell," said Ida, and hung up.

She had come in and asked permission to use our phone to tell her father that there was a new baby in the family. It was pretty late at night, but she knew where to find him; he was faithful to the backroom of one particular cider store. From the way his voice sounded he was probably a little bit drunk.

"Pa, ma's got another boy," she said.

"Huh?"

"I said ma's got another boy."

And then had come the "My Gawd, ain't she croaked yet?" And Ida's "go to hell."

It was strange that he was still expecting childbirth to kill his wife at this late date because by now the ordeal bothered her very little. A certain established routine came with it. Ida would stay home from her job at the ten cent store for two or three days, keeping as many of the younger ones as she needed for assistants away from school. Although the situation was not very rare, the children seemed to be awed by it, and during those few days the household was run with less screaming and fighting than there was the rest of the year. Perhaps the visits of the doctor scared them. A doctor was the only person they were afraid of; a policeman meant nothing to them because their own father was a policeman now and then, when his party was in power.

For the next few months, especially if it was summer, Ida had a new job when she came home from work. She would have to wheel the baby who had until recently been the youngest of the house up and down the block in the battered carriage, to keep it from yawping jealously while the mother nursed and coddled the still newer arrival. It always took a little while for the deposed infant to appreciate its seniority, and the stage between the time when a baby was young enough to be nursed and the time when it was old enough to be whipped was a very trying one for the family.

As much as they would have liked to, no one on the street could deny that Ida was a good girl. Her skirts were shorter, her lips redder and her nails shinier than anybody else's. Her clothes were so loud that even the eyes of the neighbors were hurt, but still she was a good girl. Her graciousness and obedience at home proved

## This Cock-Eyed World

A few copies of Gropper's map, "This Cock-eyed World," have been printed in two colors on a fine parchment paper. Copies may be obtained for thirty cents postpaid. Orders should be sent to the NEW MASSES, 39 West 8th Street, New York.

that. Her graciousness and obedience at home also hid the fact that she was growing up.

Until one evening she strolled down the block with Davie.

Ida and Davie had lived on the street for years, they had gone to school together for that short period when they had gone to school at all, and they had probably walked down the street side by side hundreds of times. But this was spring. They had not seen each other all winter. Neither had the neighbors seen them. And it was suddenly plain that Ida had grown up, and so had Davie.

Perhaps it was the way they walked. Ida seemed to be holding herself in, as if someone had just told her that to move her body freely was immoral. Or perhaps it was the way they stopped for a moment at her gate, stopping not because they wanted to finish talking about something, but because they did not know how to say goodbye.

From then on they walked together all the time. Ida and Davie. Davie was the son of Mrs. Smith, whom the women of the block were always planning to have put out. But when they met her they answered her hello; it was impossible to snub the friendliness that poured over her.

Every evening Ida and Davie walked together. Sometimes he was beside her while she did her daily trundling of the baby. A few of her other brothers and sisters always trailed along behind, hugging and kissing, to show what Ida and Davie should have been doing. Ida must have known what was happening behind her back, but she never let on.

Sometimes they walked alone down the street and around the square. Three, four, five times.

"That rotten thing has sent her son out to ruin my daughter," Ida's mother announced to whoever would listen. "I'll slap his face off."

Later the two began to stray farther away. They got the idea of going first singly and meeting a few blocks from home. Sometimes when they came back late at night, with the block quiet except for an occasional creak of a rocking chair to tell that there were still watchers on the porches, they walked holding hands.

Finally they ran away. To St. Louis, according to Ida's mother, who claimed to have had one letter. She got an extra beating from her husband for not taking care of his daughter properly. And after that she was the only resident of the block Mrs. Smith refused to say hello to. Mrs. Smith looked much older.

<sup>1</sup> (Published in "Pravda," April 3, 1926.)

<sup>2</sup> Uispolkom means district executive committee, or district administration in the case of local soviets.

<sup>3</sup> Sovkhoz is an estate owned and operated by a branch of the Soviet Government.

# DO THE CHURCHES CORRUPT YOUTH?

By SAMUEL ORNITZ

ONE day's Feature News; three columns in the *Times*, two in the *World*. Repeat the dose several thousand times and you get an idea of the education in lust which our daily press is industriously administering to the American "mind in the making"—and all this news is "Fit to Print!"

A Justice of the United States Supreme Court addresses the Red Cardinals (Roman, not Russian Red) and the vast Catholic Conclave at the Eucharist orgy. (See Frazer's *Golden Bough* on the subject of the sublimation of barbarous, cannibalistic rites.)

Three catch-as-can-catch-cash Presidents of Universities also make speeches that day at solemnly sweet Commencement exercises. . . .

A nation's press reports their speeches. No one reads them, so the copy writers put the *hot stuff* into the headlines and the opening paragraphs. What say the bold faces? They are always gayly grim.

## DEBAUCHERY!

LAWLESSNESS NATIONWIDE!  
Save Youth by Religious Education!

For four years now the newspaper copy experts, recognizing the unbridled sex appeal in the orations of the crusaders for religious training, have given daily prominence to the speeches at religious conventions; special sermons by assorted bishops; the Sunday night "sacred concerts" by clerical specialists in smut; ambitious district attorneys; thousands of office seekers; the odd panhandlers and notoriety hounds of the Anti-Saloon League, the Security League, Federations of Women's Clubs, Daughters of the Revolution (and Tories?); the percentage pressure salesmen of the Seminaries, Yeshivas and Sunday Schools; the publicity-spirited bankers, brokers, Chairmen of Chambers of Commerce; the pep secretaries of the Y. M. C. A., Y. M. H. A. and K. C.; the convert-catchers in fraternities, sororities and slum settlements; the cheer leaders of the Rotary and Kiwanis kiyoodles; Christian Socialists; repentant radicals; and any one else able to provide First Class Dignified Dirt.

For it all makes swell, safe sex stuff.

For it all gives the reader a nice hypocritical kick, provides howling headlines that sell newspapers. ('Tis the Tale of the Tabloid Terror, the *World* and *Times* will tell you.)

The speeches are good copy, that is, their high spots. Such as: *Menace of Modern Radical Literature*. *It is the Cause of Debutantes' Demoralization*. *Love Tots Thrown In Sewer*. *Cocktail-crazed Collegiates*. *Necking, Petting This Side of Paradise*. *Irreverence for Elders and Tradition*. *Obscenity*. *Rank Irreligion*. *Drunkenness*. *Daylight Robberies*. *Blasphemy*. *Bobbed Hair Bandits*. *Every Spit Curl in the Crime Wave*.

There is a single antidote. Religious Training for the Young! This has been yelled one billion times from platform and press. The pandemonium of

propaganda has so filled the air with din and dust that the voice of right reason no longer guides the mauve liberal and the prosperity-tired radical. . . . They have even come to make a plea for "good taste and ordinary decency" to the editors of the *NEW MASSES*. . . . Let up, Radical Literature, ere the youth of the Nation corrupts. . . .

I have examined the effect of religious education upon growing children and herewith I make my report. You will observe that I use only the infallible methods of the Anti-Saloon League's statistical logicians and of the Catholic agitators famous for "irrefutable" facts.

And my findings, I regret to say, seem to indicate most alarmingly, that

The Catholic killer wears his scapular about his neck.

The Jewish Kid Dropper murderer has a sacred Palestinian talisman in his vest pocket.

The Protestant clergyman who poisoned his mistress' husband refers to the Bible before he replies to the District Attorney.

Gerald Chapman, most famous of recent assassins, had a splendid Catholic training. He showed such promise that his aunt had hoped to make a priest of him.

The Whittemore Gang—Protestant, Jewish and Catholic—had their day of fame by killing ruthlessly, and stealing a million dollars worth of jewelry. They all had religious training.

No one remarks in grave addresses and serious editorials upon the num-

then did they come by it? Many of these kids, like James Joyce himself, had had a perfect parochial upbringing and I conclude that they had acquired the filth defensively during the time that they were taught most threateningly to shun, fear and abjure it.

Ninety-nine and one-half per cent of these youngsters came from homes in which radical writings were totally unknown. Of course such elevating literatures as catechisms, prayer books, Bibles and Macfadden moral-thwacking magazines were always on hand and in circulation. Messiah Macfadden sees to it that every piece that goes into his periodicals is scrutinized and sanctioned by a Board (on Mac's payroll) of God's Ministers, loophole-agile lawyers and professional moralists. In fact, Bernarr boasts that only the Bible has a larger circulation than *True Stories*.

Slum, middle-class, upper crust, all contributed cases. They were folks who did one thing well—sent their children to church and Sunday school. Particularly the impoverished Catholics did very well by their children. They sent their boys and girls to the parochial schools where they could have the heavenly influences at work upon them for five hours a day. None of these people ever came in contact with the depraving radical readin' and writin' and 'rithmetic of economic interpretation or an oblately obscene *NEW MASSES*.

Somehow or other, despite church and clean books, these parents and children became involved in sexual atrocities that are supposed to exist only in the literature of erotology. Somehow or other their language of lechery was rich and resplendent.

Backward and best people's children alike suffered from the same outbreak of obscenity, and it seemed as unescapable and inevitable as measles.

Catholic Red Hook young men and girls held orgies in their Social Clubs, Baptist Flatbush youths had scandalous strip-poker parties in their uncontaminated homes, Williamsburg sons and daughters of synagogue members practiced free love surreptitiously in cellars and on roofs. Nordic, Nigger, Semite, Firbolg, Alpine, Mediterranean—none could be controlled in their appetites, not even by religious training; nor could a prayer or a sermon adjust the economic situation which brought them to steal.

But ask the churchmen and they will tell you everyone else is to blame but themselves, and yet *they get the first chance at the child*. Even atheists send their children to church and Sunday school. It is one of the saddest facts I know.

The last summer I spent in the Children's Society I was the supervisor of the law enforcement work. I noticed a lush upspringing of incest cases. It made me curious (scientifically, of course). As I pored over the records a certain fact impressed itself upon me. I made a careful analysis and sent in my report. . . .



DRAWING BY MARTY LEWIS

## STILL LIFE

religious training tends to increase criminality.

First, let me qualify as an expert. I offer in evidence the actual case experience of my own career. I spent twelve years as an expert for the Prison Association and the Brooklyn Children's Society.

I have had first-hand contact with the family history of gunmen, panders, prostitutes, murderers, rapists, grand-scale embezzlers, burglars, baby Borgias, hold-up artists, etc., etc.

It is unusual—because extremely rare—to find a man or woman answering for some heinous crime who has not had some sort of religious training, simple or elaborate.

ber of men and women to be found in our state prisons, reformatories, workhouses and jails, men and women who have had the ideal start in life with a parochial school education. Or the many others, who have had the assorted benefits of clergy.

In my work in the Children's Society I interviewed hundreds of boys and girls and read thousands of similar interviews and investigated the facts and the family histories. I refer to children under the age of sixteen who had become involved in some sex offense. I discovered that they had command of an obscene vocabulary that was extraordinary and yet they had never read James Joyce! How





DRAWING BY MARTY LEWIS

**STILL LIFE**





### A WOW OF A PARTY!

DRAWING BY MAURICE BECKER

MORGAN, MELLON AND THE WALL STREET BOYS CELEBRATE ANOTHER BIG FAT FOREIGN LOAN.

Fancy my surprise several weeks later when I opened that purest of pure family newspapers *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*. There before my startled eyes was a half page spread, tabulating in a sensational statistical graph my report on the bumper incest crop. It was a half page advertisement inserted by the Children's Society. I doubt whether the *Eagle* would carry such a story in any other form. At any rate, the Society called attention to its valuable work by recounting the horrors of child exploitation. It enumerated the number of daughters seduced by their fathers . . . sisters by brothers . . . nieces by blood-uncles. The "ad" called upon the citizenry of Brooklyn to contribute to the Society and protect young girls from their demon relatives.

Now I was surprised for an interesting reason. The report I had prepared was not an alarmist's account of the dire results of incest.

I had come across the sickening fact that all the families involved in these cases had at one time or another been fussed over by some social betterment agency. For that matter the worst case,

where two brothers violated three very young sisters, the family had been "aided and advised" by

1. A parish charity;
2. Three bureaus of the scientific non-partisan general community charity society;
3. Sisters of two parochial schools;
4. The Children's Society;
5. The Court of Domestic Relations' Probation Officers;
6. Two priests who had dealt with the children since their birth, and had ministered to the parents for years.

The social saviours of all stripes had handled this case for years and never realized that the source of most of the trouble was merely economic. Seven children. (No birth control: not on your life.) Mother and father had to work. Children shifted for themselves those times that they were not annoyed by a troop of uplifters.

There were over a dozen cases in this strange advertisement and each one was a picture of the failure of social improvement efforts. Notwithstanding

my report, the vileness of the cases was the bait used to attract contributions to continue the muddling work.

One fact was very clear: everybody involved, grown-up and child, everybody had had this invaluable religious training and little of any other kind of training.

Likewise in the cases of men of all shades, degrees, derivations and creeds who were charged with rape, sodomy and impairment of children's morals. They were the ordinary run of men—poor, rich, dull, clever—but all had had the usual childhood history—religious training.

\* \* \*

Perhaps religious instruction is too terrible for the young mind to withstand. Perhaps it should be delayed until later in life when the intellect can stand the strain of the many horrors and monstrosities that are bound up with the standard religious interpretation of God.

Since I am qualified as an expert, I testify on the facts, that religious training is certainly no antidote for criminal tendencies in children.

### BACK PASSAIC

They still battle for a union in Passaic. Collective bargaining must be won. They are on the way to formal affiliation with the A. F. of L. but the bosses have not yet conceded recognition and negotiation. This may come any day.

Meanwhile the 16,000 fight on. Against hunger and provocation, Citizens Committees, strike-breaking tricks of the mill barons, Poison Ivy Lee's propaganda, police clubbings and frame-ups.

Victory seems in sight, but the last lap is the hardest. Never have workers battled more gallantly for their rights than in Passaic. We urge the readers of the NEW MASSES to support them to the end—until the union weapon is won.

Have you heaved your wallet into Passaic? Don't wait a minute longer. Address all contributions to General Relief Committee Textile Strikers, 743 Main Ave., Passaic, N. J.





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MEXICAN LABOR POSTER

BEARING THE SLOGAN—"WHO DOES NOT WORK DOES NOT EAT."



## A VIGOROUS NEW THEATRE

*The New Theatre and Cinema of Soviet Russia*, by Huntly Carter, London, Chapman & Dodd, Ltd. International Publishers. \$6.00.

Just before the war Huntly Carter, an English critic, wandered from city to city in Europe, from London to Petrograd, from Warsaw to Paris. He had none of the flatulent letters of introduction from editors and politicians so effectively flashed by wandering scribes. He had, also, precious little money; and being an insurgent critic, practically no support from English journals. Yet despite every sort of obstacle, he returned to London with a bulky manuscript entitled *The New Spirit in Drama and Art*. The few real dramatic critics in England, among them Gordon Craig, recognized here a rare contribution to the literature of the theatre; the rest set up a petulant yammer. It was this book that lifted from comparative obscurity in Europe, Stanislavsky and his Moscow Art Theatre.

Shortly after the war Huntly Carter began another such pilgrimage, panhandling, at least so I am told, his way into Russia. This time he returned with *The New Theatre and Cinema of Soviet Russia*. A more stimulating, spirited book on the theatre I have not read since Gordon Craig. Carter is fifty years old, but he writes with the fervor of a boy. He sees everything: there was a lot to see; and in simple, tart, downright English he drops all his information into the reader's lap. Here for once, thank God, is a book on the theatre without the aesthetic tremors of Stark Young, the intellectual superciliousness of Kenneth Macgowan, the jazzy trills of Oliver Saylor, the academic dullness of Barrett Clark, or the strained flippancy of George Jean Nathan. Here, thank God, is a man who can write a book about the theatre without taking off his shoes and wading sanctimoniously in the molasses of "art."

What did Huntly Carter find in the theatre of Soviet Russia?

For one thing, he found his former "discovery," the Moscow Art Theatre, dead. He found it staging old ideas in the old way. He found its director, blind to the shoots of green vitality cropping up everywhere about him, bewailing "the good old days." He describes Stanislavsky shortly after the Revolution, looking lost and bewildered, clinging to his uninspired actualistic productions of decadent bourgeois plays, worried about his dwindling audiences, lamenting the bagginess of his trousers. In a few terse pages he consigns the Moscow Art Theatre to the limbo. Why is it that years after Stanislavsky's ideas got a decent Christian burial in Russia their corpses have been exhumed for emulation on Broadway?

On the other hand, Carter found the new Russia teeming with fresh conceptions of the drama and the stage. He found peasants, workers, former intellectuals, state ministers toying with new ideas, writing new forms of plays, putting them on with a new simplicity and a new strength, drawing wildly enthusiastic audiences, turning the thea-

tre into a living, pulsing power in the life of the country. And with broad colors what a gorgeous picture he splashes down of this "theatre of, for, and by the people," this "theatre of the street and the factory," this theatre that has become a church, a political rostrum, and a school all rolled up in one.

Some of the plays he describes are crude and green. Most of them are frankly propagandistic. Carter knows this. Never mind. The miracle plays were pure propaganda. The Elizabethan plays were raw and crude. But, like the Russian play of today, they had life, they strutted around lustily on their own feet, they got across the footlights and drew the spectator in. It is easy enough to teach the drama manners. The trouble with American drama is that it has too many manners (most of them questionable, to be sure) and not enough blood. The American stage is suffering, so far as the people are concerned, from vicious anemia. In contrast to "a theatre of, for, and by the people," we have only:

1. A theatre of, for, and by the intelligentsia: intelligent, but arty, pathological, supercilious; and

2. A theatre of, for, and by the butter-and-egg population: lavish, frivolous, smutty.

"There is a positive resemblance between the State conception of the new Russian theatre and the conception of the old Greek theatre," Carter writes. "Both rest on the idea of a popular theatre, both imply socialisation of the theatre, both are concerned with cultural educational centers, and both are bound up with the establishment of a one-function theatre. By a one-function theatre is meant a theatre which stands for public service alone, not for public service and acquisitive gain, as is the case of the commercial theatre . . . If we study the ancient Greek and the modern German theatre we shall find that the Greeks and the Germans are concerned with the problem of bringing the theatre to the people as a whole, and *vice versa*, irrespective of class, but in such a manner that the working class (or masses in Greek days) shall derive as much benefit from its educative and reactive power and importance as the middle classes . . . But both the stage and the drama remained isolated from the people, the one as a playground of deputy players, the other as a product of deputy playwrights . . . The builders of the new Russian theatre are concerned with a far different problem, which may be called the new thing in the theatre . . . They plan a theatre except the mass one, and no deputies. The people are to take the stage and to let the world see them unfolding their wings under the communist touch, and the stage is to take the auditorium, as it were. This means that the whole theatre must be turned into a stage and all the workers will be players. Which, when it is done, will be merely a demonstration of the truth of Shakespeare's observation that the world's a stage and man and woman are merely players."

donment of emotion, seeing before them a portrait of their own lives and their own aspirations. How different from the dainty pageants of the women's clubs in our inland cities, bedizened with fairies and nymphs and sundry Spirits of the Seasons,—"mass" spectacles containing as much real meat for the masses as a cream puff has for a lion.

An ambitious undertaking. How is it being done?

It is being done, first, by pushing out the walls of the stage and reuniting the stage and the auditorium. This, Carter argues, is simply preparation for pushing out into the street. And in Russia, the theatre has already gone out into the street. There are pages in this book glowing with infectious enthusiasm for the "open-air mass theatres," mammoth pageants and spectacles in the market places and public squares, revolutionary scenes, battles, historic parades into which the audiences eventually throw themselves with an aban-

short, has been transported in state to the playhouse. Of this last group the now famous Meierhold is the leader. Other groups, less known, to which Carter gives astute attention and of which he reproduces excellent photographs, are Lunacharsky's theatre, under the direct supervision of the government; the Kamerny or Chamber Theatre of Moscow, already known for its neo-realistic synthesis of settings; the Central Jewish Theatre, with its highly trained actors and its elaborately grotesque spectacles; the Gabima, or Old Jewish Theatre, renowned for *The Dybbuk*; the Children's Theatre:



"VINEGAR"

DRAWING BY WANDA GAG

It is being done, also, by club and factory theatres in which the workers themselves dramatize their own lives, in which the audience as well as the people on the stage are actors; and by the proletcult theatre, which travels in trucks from factory to factory, even from saloon to saloon, receiving in payment food, clothing, and supplies.

It is being done by new forms of plays. Some are acrobatic, suggestive of the circus; others are romantic and melodramatic; still others are "constructivist," intended to "indicate not merely an end to be attained, but a certain suitability in the means employed to attain the end." Russian audiences, we are told, would have little use for the minute pathological analyses of meaningless lives which fill our theatres; they would only laugh at *Craig's Wife* and *The Vortex*, as well as at *Lulu Belle* and *The Shanghai Gesture*.

It is being done, finally, by the new forms of scenery of which we heard so much during the theatre exhibit last winter; and by the new types of actors, trained with brain and body discipline based upon mechanical and bio-mechanical theories. "King Machine," in

"I am told there is not a single child in Russia who does not know *Tom Sawyer*," adapted from Mark Twain; the state circus, to which Carter looks for still fresher dramatic impulses; and the studio theatres, offspring of the Moscow Art Theatre, its children yet wise enough to know that their parent has fallen asleep at the switches.

Of the Russian cinema, Carter has not much to say. Handicapped by a dearth of equipment, money, and technical experts, the Soviet movie has been none too creditable an achievement. Carter, however, predicts that within a year or two the Russian photoplay will, like the Russian theatre, be blazing a trail for the timorous Western producer to follow: a prediction verified only last week by press reports that a Soviet film, highly praised for its technique, has been barred from Germany and England because of its propagandist flavor.

All in all, to achieve "a working class or mass theatre springing directly from the Revolution," with the aim of "encouraging the workers to become their own authors, producers, and actors; to exalt the anarcho-mass where the anarcho-individualist had been too long" is indeed a Herculean ambition. Carter thinks Russia is going to achieve it. What he has seen of such a theatre in the making, (who, by the way, went to Russia unfavorably disposed) has made him set down in 300 pages of shrewd observation his unmitigated approval.

Harbor Allen

# IN THE BRITISH PITS

*A Pitman's Note Book*, by Roger Dataller. Dial Press. \$2.50.

Several years ago I stood at the pit-head of a coal mine that had blown up the day before. A score of bodies out of the seventy-nine who perished were still in the mine and great crowds of white-faced, silent women and children were straining against the ropes which had been stretched around the shaft. Now and then the bell rang in the hoisting house and the crowd eagerly pressed forward as the cage came up from below—from which was lifted another charred and blackened corpse.

In the nearby local union hall lay nearly sixty dead miners whose bodies had been recovered from underground in the gas-filled chambers of the mine. Some had received the full force of the explosion and were burned and mutilated beyond recognition, but for the most part they were the bodies of those who had slowly died a few hours later from the effects of the deadly after-damp. The faces of these were calm and some were even smiling. Without fear or panic they had waited in the remote recesses of the mine for the death they knew would slowly creep upon them. I recognized one of my friends as he lay dead upon his cot, Arthur McKivigen, a young miner who a short time before had been a delegate to the national convention of the United Mine Workers of America at Indianapolis. He had been working with a young boy named Martin McElvoy and on the rails of the heading where he died was written his farewell message: "Martin died first. Tell Mother I'm all right."

The calmness and casualness of the miners amid the almost constant danger of their daily toil are finely sketched by Roger Dataller in *A Pitman's Note Book*. Their oblivion to the unnaturalness of their surroundings, their jokes and laughter underground, their dialogues and conversations, their greatness and their pettiness, their virtues and their failings, the nature of the work itself—all this is vividly and accurately painted.

But the book does not touch upon the economic condition or the home life of the British miners. Beyond a few stray sentences, the author does not take the reader into the homes of the miners, where large families struggle to live on a terribly meager wage. While he refers two or three times to the union in connection with the descriptions of a local leader and the election of a branch president, Dataller evidently is not much interested in working-class organization. In a book of two hundred and seventy-five pages, not more than three are concerned with the great labor movement of Great Britain, which in both its industrial and political organization plays such a large part in the lives of the mine workers.

For the past decade the coal industry of Great Britain has been in almost constant turmoil. Strikes, lock-outs, government investigations and royal commissions to solve the mining problem have been in the fore-front of the daily news. The miners, earning a living by work in the pits, have of course been the center of all this, and any picture of mining life which does

not give the reaction of the workers to their economic condition and to the ideas of their industrial and political leaders, must be incomplete.

For nearly three months (at the present writing) the miners of Great Britain and their dependents, totalling nearly one-tenth of the population of the British Isles, have been on strike against a proposed lengthening of hours and a reduction of wages, which have only averaged from eleven to fifteen dollars a week. The present struggle, which, with all its suffering and drama, is attracting the attention of the entire world, is not a sudden or an unexpected occurrence. It has been brewing for the past five years, and in every mining village conversations have been full of speculation and opinion as to what would happen when the existing wage agreement between the Miners' Federation and the coal owners came to an end.

The British coal industry is in a very difficult position. Owing to the high cost of producing coal, the industry since the war has not been able to compete successfully with German, French, and Belgian coal. The only solution that has occurred to the owners is to reduce costs by lowering wages and increasing hours. They have continuously proclaimed the necessity for this in the press and through all the sources of publicity at their command.

To this the miners reply that the solution is not a reduction in wages or an increase of hours. They insist that such a step would result merely in new reductions for the miners on the continent and that the British coal industry would still remain in its untenable economic position. They admit that costs must be reduced but through a com-

plete reorganization of the coal industry. They point to the millions of pounds that are paid annually in royalties to the feudal lords whose only claim to the ownership of the coal is that their ancestors took possession years ago by force of arms. They show the economies that would result from a unified control of the mining industry and the wastefulness of the duplicating overheads inherent in private management. In short, they raise the whole question of nationalization. It is in connection with the coal mining industry, more than any other, that nationalization has been debated and studied. Yet Dataller does not mention it.

The subject of workers' education, it seems to me, also receives too scant attention in the *Pitman's Note Book*. Dataller is evidently familiar with the movement, for he describes a class in political economy that he attended in his locality, but he does not attach to it the significance it deserves. Two years ago I lived four months in a mining community of South Wales, earning my living underground and participating in the life, and I was particularly impressed with the intellectual activity of the miners.

In almost every town were graduates of Ruskin College, Oxford, or the London Labour College, to which miners were being sent on scholarships given by the union. These young men had started work underground at the age of fourteen, had studied hard until they were able to be among the foremost in the yearly examinations for scholarships given by the union, and then had gone to college for two years for intensive courses in history, economics, literature, philosophy, psychology and other subjects. It was tacitly understood when these miners received their scholarships that they were not to use their education to climb out of the working class but were to bestow the benefits of their culture upon the comrades who had made it possible for them to go to college. I was told that only two out of 450 alumni of the London Labour College had taken advantage of their education to go into other walks of life. I knew some of these returned students intimately, and I have never known a more intelligent set of men than these miners who acted as lecturers and professors to their comrade students, all the while they were earning their living by hard labor underground.

The British miners are developing their own class-conscious intellectuals. Over forty of them are members of parliament and hundreds of others have responsible positions in the labor movement. Others, like Dataller, are writing books. This phase, as well as the economic side of life in British mining communities, the *Pitman's Note Book* has neglected, but the book is decidedly worth reading for the vividness of its description of work underground. For this reason alone it is a contribution to working-class literature.

Powers Hapgood



Adolf Dehn 1926.

DRAWING BY ADOLF DEHN

STRIKING MINERS FROM MAERDY IN THE RHONDA VALLEY—  
CALLED LITTLE MOSCOW

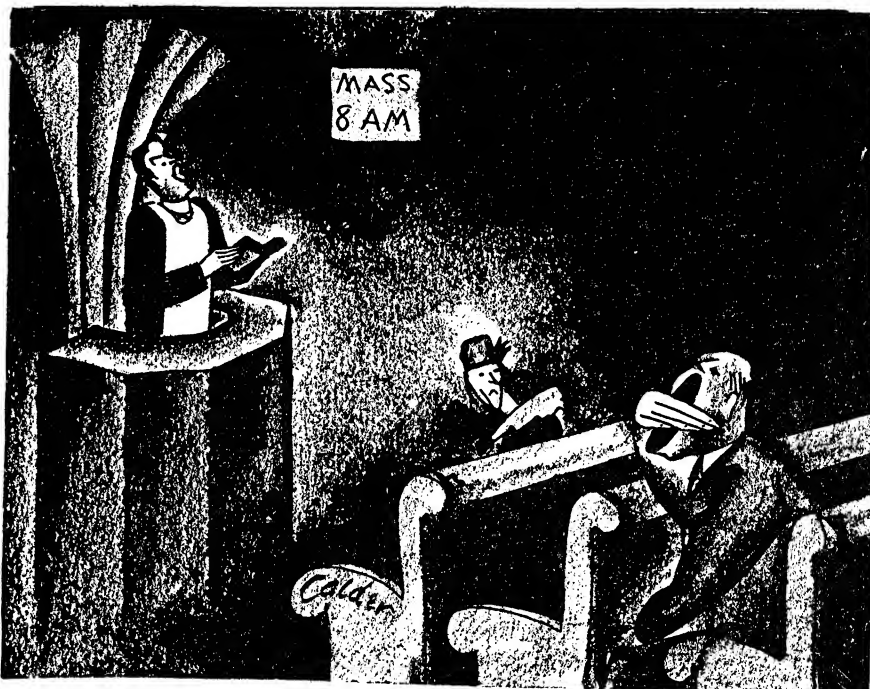




DRAWING BY ADOLF DEHN

STRIKING MINERS FROM MAERDY IN THE RHONDA VALLEY—  
CALLED LITTLE MOSCOW





DRAWING BY SANDY CALDER

EARLY CHRISTIAN MARTYR MAKING THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

## SNARLING DIPLOMATS

*The International Anarchy 1904-1914*, by G. Lowes Dickinson, The Century Company, \$3.50.

This book deals with the diplomatic history of Europe in the ten years that preceded the last war. That is to say it describes the movements of the bare mechanism of what is generally considered to be history. During those ten years that ended in the greatest international battle royal we know anything about, history consisted of the actions of aggregations known as states or nations, which considered themselves divine and above human law. These states were the result of the partial capture by money and manufacturing and trading interests of ancient feudal mechanisms based on landholding.

The point of contact between various states was a body of men wearing decorations on their frock coats and ribbons across their shirtfronts known as diplomats. In this book Mr. Dickinson has unravelled very skillfully the disheartening tangle of the schemes and counterschemes of these diplomats that eventually became so snarled that the only way any of the governments could save their faces was to proceed to the systematic slaughter of their citizens. He takes you through the series of squabbles over the spoils of a world subdued by European industrialism, explains the line-ups of the Triple Entente and the Triple Alliance, the general jockeying for position in the years when the nations circled and snarled round each other like a lot of dogs getting ready for a fight. He goes into the details of the interesting arrangements for the partition of Persia, China and Africa, and the endless carving of Turkey, describes the tryouts in the Balkans and in Manchuria and leaves you at the opening of the Big Parade. A nasty tiresome job exceedingly well done.

My only quarrel with the book is that it includes so thin a section of the

events and movements of those ten years as to be virtually meaningless unless used in connection with other information, and so far as I know such fair-minded and feeling compilations of the other information do not exist. To be really useful to the average newspaper-reading man *The International Anarchy* should have three or four companion volumes. The diplomatic history gives you only a sideways glimpse of the puppetshow. You see the fantastic comedy going on, but you don't see the audience, you have no inkling of why the play is being performed, you are not told who pays the men who pull the strings. This view of history seems to me just one layer more profound than that of the drunken Montenegrin who described the origins of the war to me one night in the Tuileries gardens in Paris during the Peace Conference.

"An' de Emperor of Austria he say to de Keeng of Serbia, whyfor you let dem guys keel my nephew, an' de Keeng of Serbia, he brave man, say You goddam sonno beesh, not my fault dem guys keel your nephew, then Kaiser Wilhelm an' Franz Josef they make fight quick, an' de great Czar Nickolas he love all the Slavs, so he make fight, an' de Keeng of England, he his cousin, he see everywhere France and Belgium they make big fight, so he say to de English people, Goddammit to hell we're comin' in too, and Meester Veelson he afraid his English brothers get licked, so he come in an' clean up everybody. Aint dat de size of it, Jack?"

Within its very restricted field *The International Anarchy* is a very valuable work, but from the standpoint of the victims of, rather than specialists in political science, average men who woke up one morning and found themselves dressed in khaki and doing bayonet drill, and who'll be doing it again some fine morning if they don't watch out, it seems rather a shame that the

author didn't focus his microscope upon the causes, in so far as they are traceable, of the phenomenon as well as upon the algebra of diplomacy that means nothing unless you know what the symbols stand for. To know what the symbols stood for during those ten years, we would need a history of international finance during that time, a history of the smouldering war between capitalist industry and the working men

that produced its wealth, a history of colonization for markets and colonization for raw materials, a history of the press and of the mass morals and mass ideals of the epoch. If we had that material before us I doubt very much if we would come to Mr. Dickinson's conclusion that the League of Nations is the cure-all for a sick world.

John Dos Passos

## OLEAGINOUS STAKES

*Oil Imperialism*, by Louis Fischer. International Publishers. \$2.00.

Various sorts and shades of economic imperialism have developed since this great American Commonwealth hit its stride for world empire. Sugar imperialism in Cuba, diamond imperialism in Africa, pineapple imperialism in Hawaii, manganese imperialism in Costa Rica, Portland cement imperialism and canned meat imperialism in Argentina, rubber imperialism in Sumatra, banana imperialism in Nicaragua—the list covers the commodities of countries from the Azores to Zululand. But, far and away, the greatest of these is oil imperialism placed under the microscope, analyzed and dissected by Mr. Louis Fischer in this very competent volume. Oil imperialism dwarfs all the other imperialisms, the "steel and gold" competitions, the coffee plantation hunts, the Manchesterian trade rivalries that marked the adolescent days of America's overseas development.

The smell of "gas" not only makes life precarious along our bemotored boulevards and highways. The struggle for the stuff makes peace advocates despair and sets statesmen in plug hats to planning wars. This book, in brief, is another contribution to the thesis that wars are not fought nowadays to protect womanhood, to save civilization, to defend small nations or to spread idealism and democracy. Read Fischer's account of the Genoa Conference or the Hague Conference and every other conference that has concerned itself with "rehabilitating" something or other in Europe, and you will find the diplomats wading knee-deep in oil furnished by the Standard, the Royal-Dutch-Shell or other competitors for the oleaginous stakes.

And for those who are in the habit of chirping up about "Bolshevik imperialism," especially in the matter of certain Georgian mineral deposits, this book contributes much distasteful information. Such as those pages pertaining to the Caucasian Republic of Georgia before the workers and Red Army deputies took control of it:

"Imagine the joy, then, of Wilhelm II, Hindenburg, Ludendorff, von Tirpitz and the whole Junker clique of reactionary monarchists when the Mensheviks, whose avowed aim it was to establish the socialist heaven on earth, invited them into their beautiful mountain home. . . . Thereafter, until the Germans left, the Menshevik Republic was merely a puppet and a tool in their hands."

Then came the British legions hot on the oil trail, and "in Georgia they in-

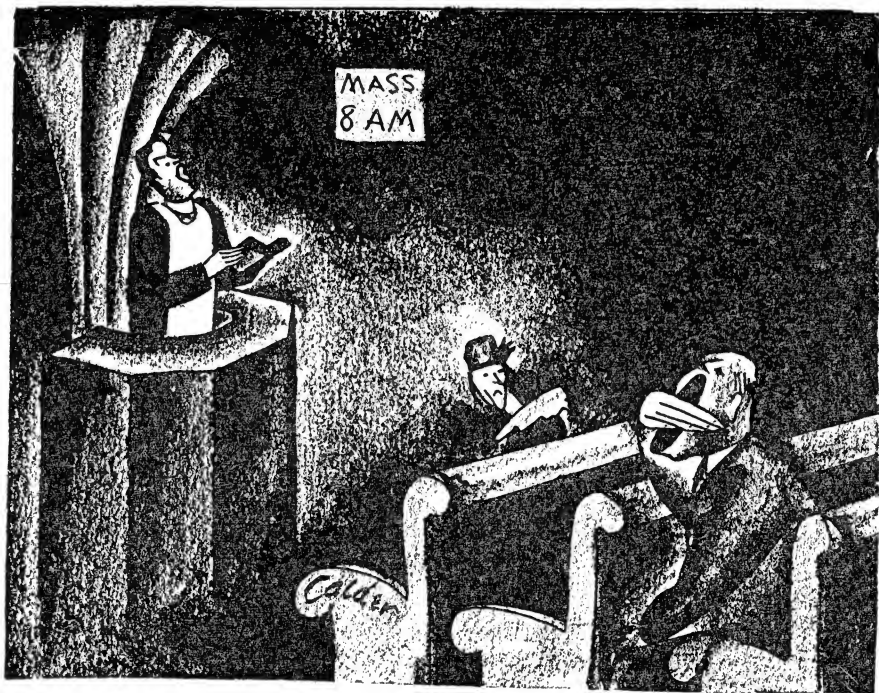
structed the Menshevik regime as to who of the Communists was to be arrested and who was not to be released." Conveniently enough, "the Mensheviks proved as ready to do the bidding of the British general as they had been to obey the dictates of the German colonel only a few months previously." What a truly touching neutrality toward the imperial Allied and Entente oil prospectors! How hospitably they treated them with Caucasian wine and promises of mineral rights in order to secure their protection against these frightful, materialistic, heathen, working-class Bolsheviks. This part of Mr. Fischer's book will make appropriate weekend reading for such warm friends of the anti-soviet National Republic of Georgia (address since 1921—Paris, France) as Barron Collier, advertising magnate and Florida land promoter, Henry Lane Wilson, former American Minister to Mexico and a chum of the American oil companies there, John A. Stewart, of the Ajax Oil Company, manufacturers of oil drilling machinery, John Hays Hammond, supercapitalist, former Chairman Wilcox of the Republican National Committee and Mr. William Green, whom we all know.

Some of the most succulent passages in this ably documented and amply footnoted book are those referring to the desertions from the ranks of the international oil men's blockade and boycott of the tainted Bolshevik oil. All the nations (that is all the companies), you see, decided they would not touch this poisoned, stolen, confiscated petroleum. But the honorable agreements of the honorable oil men proved to be flimsy scraps of paper. One after the other they sneaked around to make private calls on the Russian Naptha Syndicate to inquire just how much they could have and at what prices. The ethical Standard Oil Company was not the least of these mutual double-crossers.

Certain points stand out in Fischer's story of the oil game in the Soviet Union: the Soviet oil exports last year exceeded the norm of prewar; their oil production has the jump on all other countries because of resources, proximity to markets and superiority of product; America is more and more in need of Red oil and is buying it by the hundreds of thousands of tons; the Bolsheviks, at first inclined to grant concessions to foreign exploiters, are increasingly disinclined to follow this policy and their growing economic strength makes it probable that they will cling tightly to all their important fields and develop them for themselves.

Finally it stands out as plain as a pike staff that the Standard Oil and





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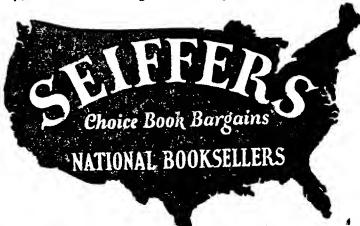
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publicity agent Ivy Lee are engaging in controversy with Ralph Easley and Elihu Root on the matter of Russian recognition—not for the mental calisthenics involved but for certain reasons implicit in the facts above recorded. Of course, as Fischer points out, "through the correspondence there is not the slightest mention of oil. But the odor of petroleum clings heavily about the stationery on which it is written."

The moral and conclusion also in Mr. Fischer's words:

## HUXLEY'S HALF-HOLIDAY

*Two or Three Graces*, by Aldous Huxley. George H. Doran Company. \$2.00

Aldous Huxley has devoted the first period of a precocious talent to documenting the post-war moral and spiritual exhaustion of England's upper and upper-middle classes; he has incorporated his literary-scientific acceptance of these conditions into an attitude—a kind of neo-realism spiced with intellectual libertinism. The attitude has become popular both in England and in this country because it is easy; far less irksome than the cold Puritan fire with which Shaw has penetrated similar material. It makes a virtue of impotence, and having no bread, offers instead the honest salt of shamelessness.

Not so honest. Mr. Huxley has always been a little better than his books, he has never been quite comfortable in his attitude and now he is tentatively forsaking it. The material is thin; just how thin it is became evident when the General Strike smashed British complacency into a thousand fragments, put all the sad young men into strike-breaking overalls, and sent Winston Churchill squalling to the highest limb of neo-Napoleonic fustian. In his latest volume, Mr. Huxley sticks to this material—the cheap studio sophistication which is all the devitalized English upper classes can afford; but he takes at least a half-holiday from his attitude, and his art, growing less descriptive, begins to approach universality.

*Two or Three Graces* is a good story, not wholly invalidated by an artificial and impotent conclusion. Grace, a lady of the upper middle class who derives quite directly from Madame Bovary, is almost, but not

"The menace must grow as time goes on, and the pacifist, with the Mosul trouble and the Mexican tangle fresh in mind, should not content himself with crying 'Peace, Peace, Peace' to a world which will not listen because it cannot. . . . Nothing is won by fighting vaguely against war. The paramount thing is to combat the forces that make for war. The oil kings are today the most promising of these forces."

The battle against these "gas" monarchs is a part of the class struggle which only workers' unions and workers' governments can carry on.

Robert Dunn

quite a tragic figure. Mr. Huxley's nervous skepticism is too selfconscious to permit it. Perhaps he is right. It is true that Grace had no core, but this is also true: if you make people like apples without cores and then put them through the mill of the gods, what you get is not tragedy but apple sauce—in other words, a comedy of manners. That is what Mr. Huxley has given us, and in the opinion of the reviewer, it is the best thing he has done yet. He has also given some decidedly interesting self-revelation. Take this, in which Huxley, speaking through the mouth of Kingham the emotionalist, sits in judgment upon himself:

"Your great defect is spiritual impotence. Your morality, your art—they're just impotence organized into systems. Your whole view of life—impotence again. Your very strength, such as it is—your horrible passive resistance—that's based in impotence too. . . . Everything that's easy and momentarily diverting and anaesthetic tempts—people, chatter, drink, fornication. Everything that's difficult and big, everything that needs thought and effort, repels. It's the war that did it. Not to mention the peace. But it would have come gradually in any case. Modern life was making it inevitable. Look at the young people who had nothing to do with the war—were only children when it happened—they're the worst of all. It's time to stop, it's time to do something. Can't you see that you can't go on like this? Can't you see?"

Whatever Mr. Huxley does or does not do in the future, he unquestionably sees.

The shorter stories in the volume, including *Half-holiday* are far below *Two or Three Graces* in quality.

James Rorty

*Warriors in Undress*, by F. J. Hudleston. Little Brown & Company. \$3.50.

A queer, cackling book, bred out of Lytton Strachey by a librarian's card index. As impish as a superannuated burlesque queen and as humorless as well, as the British War Office of which the author is the librarian. The book exhibits a kind of gossip scholarship plus all the literary vices known to biography. Chief of these is the author's ineffably tasteless, leering absorption with his warriors' affairs of the heart. Judging from the critical excerpts printed on the jacket, England can still swallow this stuff without

gargling. The English reviewers swallow something even more terrible: Mr. Hudleston's valetudinarian addiction to American slang, which is a thing for crying out loud. Nevertheless, such is the astonishing vitality of facts that the volume is not entirely worthless. Thanks to Mr. Hudleston, one perceives quite clearly that the Duke of Wellington was a cad, a snob, and a mean brute and that Garibaldi was an old fool; also that the English upper class which chatters so much about "gentlemen" actually produced one in the person of the Duke of York. The remainder of the book is a heap of ill-assorted rubbish not worth the sifting.

J. R.

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*Porto Rico*, by Knowlton Mixer. The  
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Down the long beaches rolls the  
sound of surf thunder. Wheeling gulls  
mew harshly. Palm trees rattle in the  
wind. Little lizards spraddle across  
the gravel walks. And then suddenly  
through this tropic symphony the voices  
of men singing. Hark to the lilt of their  
chorus;

"R-O-T-A-R-Y, that spells Ro-  
tary—"

Porto Rico, land of enchantment  
and rich Elks and poor natives, what  
could the gods have had in mind on  
that fateful day of May 12th, 1898,  
when the shells from Admiral Samp-  
son's fleet wrought such havoc among  
the sleepy convents and orphan asylums  
of San Juan, your principal city. Did  
they dream that you, the Pearl of the  
Antilles, were to be lugged into Un-  
cle Sam's show window in a jazzed up  
setting? Can't we interest you in our  
pearl? It's the genu-wine article, Mis-  
ter, though of course, it's not so much  
this jool we're selling as it is *Service*.

Yes, sir, the service we've given these  
here natives, some million and a half of  
'em on an island forty miles wide, one  
hundred miles long and a four days'  
trip from New York is sumpin' wunner-  
ful. Why we got some of the best of  
them in our Rotary and we taught 'em  
the songs and we got a broadcasting  
tower that's taller than Morro Castle,  
and they're building a coupla concrete  
factories and in 1924 we exported  
\$48,000,000 worth of sugar and mo-  
lasses and close to \$19,000,000 worth  
of tobacco to the States and—

Well, you can read all about the  
wonder achievements of our New Im-  
perialism in a book by Knowlton Mix-  
er called *Porto Rico*. Better yet, you  
can turn to the back of the book and  
find the rates, sailing schedules, etc.,  
of the ship that will take you to our  
only Organized Territory (Note to la-  
bor readers: this is not to be confused  
with trade union organization, the Ter-  
ritory is organized by Mid-West po-  
liticians brought down during the open  
season for lame ducks.) Also Mr.  
Mixer thoughtfully provides a list of  
the principal hotels on the island, their

rates for the week and for the transient  
trade, tells you how to hire auto busses,  
tells you that,—

"Into this easy-going, peace-loving  
people accustomed for three hundred  
years to the arbitrary rule of a monar-  
chical government has been injected the  
virus of American liberty. In less than  
a single generation we have tried to im-  
plant in this alien soil the conception of  
responsible citizenship which we our-  
selves have but imperfectly learned un-  
der three centuries of free institutions."

Mr. Mixer is right. That is just  
what is the trouble with Porto Rico as  
you will discover if you go completely  
out of your head and select this dry is-  
land for a tour in preference to charm-  
ing and unvolsteady Cuba nearby.

Though you won't find it in Mr.  
Mixer's booster book, the fact is that in  
Porto Rico we are attempting to impose  
a Go-getter civilization upon a natural-  
ly slow-moving, care-free people. Long  
since the natives learned to shout  
"Mon-ee. Pliss give mon-ee" at the  
sight of an American tourist. It may  
take time, as Mr. Mixer hints, but no  
doubt modern efficiency methods will  
soon have every adorable little black  
child on the island conversant with the  
roar of the Rotary, the moan of the  
Moose, the cry of the Kiwanis. Better  
schools, better roads, better plumbing,  
better bed-time stories may be the  
beneficent by-products of this process  
but—

A young army lieutenant with the  
soul of a poet (and there are several  
such among the white officers of the  
native Porto Rican regiment) took me  
up one night to the terrace in front of  
Casa Blanca, one of the oldest build-  
ings in America. Before us the ocean  
brooded under a high-riding moon that  
threw a light of incredible beauty upon  
the white walls of the ancient pile. My  
friend looked about him with eyes that  
were full of real love for the place.  
Then he chuckled grimly and said:  
"I had a salesman from Syracuse up  
here the other night and when he saw  
that blank wall space, he pounded me  
on the back and shouted, 'My God,  
what a location for one of our new elec-  
tric signs.'"

McAlister Coleman

*This Waking Hour*, Leon Srabian  
Herald. Thomas Seltzer, New York.  
\$1.75.

*This Waking Hour* has the vir-  
tue of sincerity. All of the poems in  
the book are the expressions of genuine  
emotions or genuine thoughts colored  
by emotion. They are all real cries of  
a voice in the wilderness—of a lost  
soul in the wilderness. That is what  
makes them so effective despite their  
technical imperfections.

The despair that is voiced in these  
poems is another expression of post-war  
disillusionment. Thirteen years ago  
Herald left his quiet native village of  
Put-Aringe in Armenia. The village  
was wiped out in the war. Herald  
says:

God Aringe has lost his power,  
And our village has been annihilated.  
Some day I might be found still dream-  
ing somewhere;

But who will tell me of your where-  
abouts.

With me your image is as a flower  
Fading for ten years and still unfaded;  
Your name is as a perfume vanishing—  
But never, never vanished.

The perfume has not vanished; nor  
has the bitter feeling of frustration and  
hopelessness that came with the war.  
Sometimes Herald's poems do not ex-  
press despair; sometimes they are mysti-  
cal. That does not make them the  
less an expression of disillusionment  
and impotence. The sincerity and in-  
tensity with which this feeling is ex-  
pressed, however, make *This Waking  
Hour* poetry, despite occasional far-  
fetched images and awkward construc-  
tions due to Herald's unfamiliarity with  
the language.

Harry Freeman.

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QUARTER

an International Quarterly  
of the Arts

edited by

ERNEST WALSH

and

ETHEL MOORHEAD

Dear Mr. Walsh:

... I have read one copy of This Quarter, and enjoyed its vigor, clarity and aggressiveness. I like a fighting magazine—how deadly dull "Art" has become in the hands of the overfed bourgeoisie.

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Michael Gold.

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SOPHISTICATED INANITY

Count Bruga, by Ben Hecht. Boni & Liveright. \$2.00.

The best thing about this book is the cover design. If one does not proceed beyond it, one may conceive the story to be pleasantly fantastic, the writing to be neat and idiosyncratic. None of these virtues is actually to be found between the covers of the volume.

The narrative commences with a full-length portrait, veracious (in some details) as a photograph, malicious as a political cartoon, and withal quite pointless, of a contemporary poet, disguised under the name of Jules Ganz, alias Count Bruga of Poland. Some twenty-five centuries ago a Greek critic observed that the public is apt to enjoy a work of art which offers it the pleasures of recognition. The first part of this tale does fragmentarily provide the cognoscenti with that pleasure. But the Greek critic allowed that this was not the single requirement of a fiction, as the author of Count Bruga appears to think. Moreover, Mr. Hecht's account of his confrere is so ill-humored, his satire is so heavy-handed, his sarcasm so dull, that even the caricature fails to be interesting.

The author soon tires of his literary lampoon and goes off at a tangent into a mystery story, spiced with rape and murder. This extremely incoherent and immitigably tedious narrative makes up the remainder of the book. It is hard to see just why it was written. It could scarcely have been to gratify Mr. Hecht, unless it pleases him to produce a work that is muddled in conception and sloppy in workmanship. It has no claim upon the attention of the public, since it presents neither good character study, nor exciting action, nor stylistic verve. The people are marionettes carved with a blunt and dirty jack-knife. The plot is a stale *olla podrida* of adulterated excitements. The writing glitters like a paste brooch, from which half the stones have fallen out.

Somewhere towards the end of the book is inserted a story which has nothing to do with what precedes or follows, but which has at least the merit of being clear, and which approximates the thrilling. It is, however, not sufficiently well written to sustain the tension demanded by its Poe-esque theme.

A mean, hard-boiled, empty, boring book.

Babette Deutsch

INN OR SPEAK-EASY?

Scarlet and Mellow, by Alfred Kreymborg. Boni & Liveright. \$2.00.

Poetry is still a boot-leg commodity in these States. That is to say, it is if the poet thinks so. Whitman, of course, didn't think so, and dispensed his poetry freely and arrogantly in the open air. His verse moves as simply and powerfully as a cloud gathers or a tide rolls in upon the beach. You can't impugn these things, legally or aesthetically, and most attempts to criticize Whitman are equally futile. A natural phenomenon—uncorrupted nature speaking through the mouth of a man.

What has Whitman got to do with Alfred Kreymborg? Very little. Whitman speaks wide and free. Kreymborg speaks soft and easy. He is city-bred and no pioneer. He is civilized—the word conveys both his quality and his limitation. He is avowedly in retreat from the contemporary Babel. It is a valiant Fabian retreat—one can hear Kreymborg muttering obstinately like Galileo "It moves just the same"—but it is a retreat. Don't try to read Kreymborg in the open air. His is chamber music, played softly in a quiet inn to which the elect may gain entrance by murmuring in cultivated voices that they know Alfred Stieglitz. *Sauve qui peut* is his motto and it must be admitted that Kreymborg has saved himself which is a good deal. He has paid, of course. Occasionally his work betrays a little of the sentimentality involved in permitting oneself to be hurt. Witness the following:

Cloudy Drop

He played a clinging air for them.  
Along the road, across a string:  
Men looked as deaf as they were dumb  
And caused a wound to sing:

There's little food in melodies,  
There's much more to be found  
By gulping ones and twos in threes  
Until your belly's round:

His longing didn't penetrate:  
His bow-string sped an arrow  
That glanced off, whistled by—each  
Had grown too hard or narrow:

There's selfishness inside a house,  
There's greed in every street:  
It boots a beggar, hide his mouse,  
And beat a soft retreat:

He stole away somewhere to brood,  
Nobody called out, Stop—  
Except an inn that understood,  
Gathered and poured a drop.

But this is far from being the best poem in a volume which for the first forty pages at least tempts to almost continuous applause. Adopting from the beginning a minor attitude—the honorable function of the part-sayer, to use Whitman's language, Kreymborg has sustained and developed his art as well as any poet in America. His thinking and feeling, always sharply individual, has gathered strength and penetration. His technique whether in free verse or in rhyme—and by implication Kreymborg points out that it doesn't matter—is scrupulous and competent. In "Parallels" and "Tobacco Smoke" he has written singularly acute, sane and subtle studies of human relations which are better than all but the best of Browning.

Kreymborg too has run the gauntlet of the Poetry Societies and the women's clubs. But his fibre is tough and his talent, far from being deliquescent, continues to yield valid contributions to American poetry.

James Rorty

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*Happiness in Marriage*, by Margaret Sanger. Brentano's. \$2.00.

Mrs. Sanger has gone a long way in her reaction against sex taboos. She has destroyed the veils that have mystified sex only to enshroud it with a romantic halo, equally mysterious. Instead of being an invention of the devil or at best an unfortunate and disgusting method of reproduction, as it is for the Puritan, sexual intercourse becomes for Mrs. Sanger a "poem," a "symphony," even a "religion." Instead of being an unmentioned and unmentionable subject, sex becomes a key problem, the solution of which is a panacea for all ills, private and social.

In her latest book Mrs. Sanger discusses marriage, a question which is intimately connected but by no means identical with the question of sex; nevertheless her book is exclusively concerned with ramifications of the sex question, making no mention of other angles of the marriage problem. *Happiness in Marriage* strikes the reader, for whom fornication and marriage are not synonymous, as a misnomer.

*Happiness in Marriage*, according to the preface, is offered as a solution to the problems of those who are contemplating or consummating marriage (sex). Mrs. Sanger is convinced by her observation of individual cases that the business of marriage (sex) is sadly mismanaged. Ergo, she offers the reader a complete handbook of love. She offers advice to the boy and girl in

puberty, to courting couples, to couples on their honeymoon. She has chapters on the "organs of sex and their functions," on the "drama of love," on "sex communion," on birth control, etc. . . . Her book is a careful guide for the lover. No home is complete without one.

Her advice to young girls is a fair sample of the book. She cautions the young woman "to keep her body fresh and clean, free from the odors of perspiration," and to "prevent through daily care the possibility of unpleasantness in this respect." "Remember," she says, "that chronic constipation is the enemy of beauty," and that proper care of the hands and the hair are essential preparations for the drama of love.

Equipped with such knowledge, the young woman is prepared to sally forth and capture a husband. To do this she must learn to be "playfully elusive"; for it is the "business" of the young woman to awaken a desire, to nourish it, to cultivate it, to direct it.

Advice like this contrasts strangely with Mrs. Sanger's romanticization of sex. Saccharine expressions like the "overwhelming poetry of sex" and "the mysterious miracle of love" simmer beside advice about the care of the teeth, and warnings to the young husband against levity in bed. *Happiness in Marriage* is an inflated Beatrice Fairfax column.

Harry Freeman

## A BUNKLESS MOVIE

The extraordinary reception which greeted the presentation of the UFA film, *Variety*, was wholly deserved.

First to be noted is that the scenario was written not by a literary man but by the director of the picture, so that what was produced on the screen was not literary values but motion picture values. Second, that the acting was vitally and distinctly acting for the camera, totally different in its materials and calculated effects from that of the stage. Third, that the plastic values were never those of painting, but only those which pertained to the mechanical eye which saw them—definite, clean-cut, immaculate. Fourth, that the camera work did not involve "effects" or stunts of the camera, but the seeing of familiar things in a totally new way, the awakening of wonder. All these elements were made fluid and malleable in the creative imagination, through whose abundant forms the strange, strenuous rhythms of the variety show plotted their fierce drama.

The story—the infernal triangle, the sort of thing one reads about in the newspapers every day of the year. But by stripping his story to its crude essentials, Dupont arrived at those elementary dynamics which motivate our human contacts with one another. Arrived, in other words, at bedrock movie values.

Similarly, the acting. This naked parable of the elephant, the leopard and

the snake proceeds through all its smooth-sliding pistons and spinning wheels with the svelte precision of a high powered car. The smash-up against the wall of destiny is a holocaust. No written word could better portray the terror and the beauty of the measure man treads in the shadow of death than the high-vaulting dance of the three trapezists, the imagination o'erleaping itself.

*Variety* riots in the beauty of materials, of things alive and perfect in themselves, whether they be the vulgar marble table-top of the saloon, the ironic transparency of plate glass or the witchery of Lya da Puta's legs. The hat of Emil Jannings, after the elephant has annihilated the snake, is eloquent of destruction. In *Variety* plastic values are caught by seeing through, rather than with the eye.

Much of the camera work of the movies, at its best, has been concerned with elaborate conceits, with the result that though the facility involved has astonished, it has not deeply moved. It should suffice to say that in the UFA film the camera substitutes vision and insight for the mere mechanics of the camera. This is not to discount the almost incredible ingenuity with which the scenes of *Variety* were shot by Carl Freund. But in looking at a Cezanne, it is the painting and not the brush stroke that matters.

Edwin Seaver

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# BRASS KNUCKLES SANTA CLAUS

(Continued from page 7)

Then commenting on the careers of Messrs. Wilson, Harding and Coolidge:

"If there's any reason why an intelligent, honest and hustling young conductor or motorman of the Interborough Rapid Transit Company shouldn't live to become President of the United States it's not obvious."

One pride of the company is the Subway Band. The *Bulletin* informs us that this band has been also the official band of the Loyal Order of Moose of which "the Hon. James J. Davis is the head." Secretary Davis once praised the band boys in a letter to the president of the company:

"I was especially impressed with that band of yours. You can well be proud of having fathered and fostered it to its present glorious efficiency."

Ironically enough this band is said to have rendered with particular charm Prof. Goldman's famous march, "Chimes of Liberty."

Of course there are other departments in the *Bulletin*: *Pleasing the Public*, *Music*, *Woman's Sphere*, *Our Novelty Page*, *Sports*, *Bulletin Tots* (baby pictures again) and the *Subway Honor Roll*, as well as generous interviews with those who have retired on pension after 50 years underground between the Bronx and the Battery.

There may also be just a word or two given in the *Bulletin* to the sordid matter of wages. This is usually introduced by Mr. Hedley with a few lines on the perennially bankrupt state of the company followed by about 100 words telling readers that Mr. Connolly and Mr. Hedley exchanged letters on the subject and that wages will remain "as is" for another twelve month. The real *Brotherhood Notes* in the same issue may be expansive on the Annual Outing and Picnic, the wonderful Colored Employees' Ball or some other "Banner Night" or "Get-together Evening for Lonesome Hearts" at the company's expense.

Articles in the *Bulletin* cover a wide range of interest but nothing concerning the working class or trade union organization is permitted. "Why the Organization of the Interborough Employees is Boosting a Six Cent Fare" was a piece by a former company union president. And at a later period "A Memorial on the Seven Cent Fare" was appropriate. Or an oration by Martin W. Littleton, Esq., on the glories of private ownership and the iniquities of the public ownership advocates who are accused of "polyglot radicalism." Followed by an article on "Boosting Business for your Company," Mr. Hedley on "Loyalty," and Andrew Mellon, himself, on "Success."

\* \* \*

This is the background against which the motormen and their followers revolted, the atmosphere into which they have been driven back. And this is the contract the "free agent" and untrammelled citizen who works for the welfare-cursed Interborough must sign when, in the exercise of his exalted free

will and glorious personal liberty, he elects to work 84 hours a week as a stationman for 41 cents an hour, or for 69 cents an hour as a motorman, or for 58 cents an hour as a switchman. This is the symbol of the I. R. T. company union, the contract used under the sharing of management relationship hallowed by the *New York Times*. Step up to the employment desk, brother worker, and sign on the dotted line:

"In conformity with the policy adopted by the Brotherhood and consented to by the Company (the poor company just had to consent to what the Brotherhood adopted—RD) and as a condition of employment, I expressly agree that I will remain a member of the Brotherhood during the time I am employed by the Company and am eligible to membership therein;

"That I am not and will not become identified in any manner with the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway Employees of America, or with any other association of street railway or other employees with the exception of this Brotherhood and the Voluntary Relief Department of the Company while a member of the Brotherhood or in the employ of the Company.

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\* \* \*

In 1916 the I. R. T. put over this contract and broke the strike of the A. F. of L. union against it. Since 1917 nothing has been done to win the workers away from company unionism and the welfare strangle hold. When the eruption came on Independence Day, 1926, the A. F. of L. union, the Amalgamated, put out feelers for the affiliation of the rebels. Everyone in the strikers' confidence, except a few cynical sectarians, advised them to link up with the American labor movement as represented in this union. But the men were hesitant and uncertain and preoccupied. Divided opinion among the leaders resulted in delay. Finally when they came into conference with the Amalgamated representatives the strike outlook was less hopeful and the men report they were handled like babies and given little encouragement. This attempt to get together was apparently half-hearted on both sides, but the blame rests chiefly with the older and more experienced men of the Amalgamated who failed to help the strikers with advice, counsel or leadership. The representatives of this international seem to have little of the flaming spirit that nearly brought a general strike on New York City in 1916. Like other A. F. of L. officials they appear afraid to come in contact with vital, fighting elements among the workers, even though, as in this case, most of them be Irish! However, we have no reason to believe that, had the strikers joined the A. F. of L., they would have been more tenderly

(Continued on page 30)

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## BRASS KNUCKLES SANTA CLAUS

(Continued from page 29)

handled by Mr. Hedley. Indeed, if we are to judge by the tactics of 1916, they would have been even more feared and probably as ruthlessly crushed by the anti-all-labor dictatorship on the I. R. T. The strike ended as usual with a wholesale discharge of the leaders, despite the company's verbal agreement to take them back.

The failure of the revolt leaves the company union and the Quackenbush-

Hedley-Connolly Triumvirate in control, with the "Brotherhood" boosting the company, knocking the five cent fare, printing the baby's pictures and otherwise fooling, bulldozing and robbing the workers till the next revolt breaks out. When that will be depends on how much manhood and independence survives the next wave of welfare slush that sweeps through the subways and over the L's.

## BERTIE — A STORY

(Continued from page 10)

town and approached the square. "You can let me out at Merrick's," Paul said, and Bertie obeyed. Paul got out of the car without a word and went in.

Bertie started the car up again. He did not know where to go, or what to do. He drove around the square, round and round. As he passed Merrick's he could see Paul standing at the cigar counter, talking and laughing. What were they laughing about?

If Paul told. . . but Paul would not tell. Not Paul.

He drove around some more, and passed Paul headed for home. He was walking jauntily along, humming to himself, and took no notice of Bertie. Why didn't he speak? Did that mean he had told?

Bertie drove around again and reconnoitered at Merrick's. He struggled awhile, then stopped the car and went in. He had to find out.

There were farmers inside, making purchases: tobacco, fruit and ice cream. They seemed healthy and whole, their voices rang in the air. They all stared at Bertie. Old Man Merrick, behind the cigar stand, had a broad grin on his face.

If they knew anything, they would say something, make some wise crack.

He looked down in the case and ordered some cigars. One, two, three. He could think of nothing more masculine. Lighting one, he leaned against the counter and waited. He gave them plenty of time, but nobody said anything.

At last he went out, bobbing up and down like a girl. Just because he didn't want to, he had to walk that way. He couldn't help it.

People in the street, families going home from the movies, the watchman in front of the bank, all stared at Bertie. The whole world was staring at him.

The moon was high now, flooding the night, and it cast strange flat shadows of Bertie driving home in his truck. The Ford bounced crazily over the road; he drove faster and faster, and his fear grew to panic. He abandoned control of himself as a washwoman might scatter her apron of clothespins. He loathed himself, he called himself unspeakable names. Paul should have killed him, or somebody should. Or else he should commit suicide, and leave a note for Paul, saying, "What you were too good and kind to do, I have done with my own hand . . . my friend."

Everybody would be glad, and nobody sorry, not even Paul. Why should Paul be sorry? He was right, the world is always right, and Bertie was wrong. He praised Paul; he could not find words fine enough. How he wished he could have been in Paul's place and hit himself as Paul hit him!

But Paul would not tell. . . now. Later, when he came home from camp in his flyer's uniform, and the home town looked new to him, he would ask, "How's our friend Bertie?" And then, "Say, do you know. . ."

There would be no stopping it then. It would spread, he would never escape it. He had a vision of himself running wildly from something: from a prairie fire, stamping and running.

Once when he was a small boy he had made a bonfire on a windy day, against his father's orders. The dry grass caught on the edge of the pile and swept out of his reach. It spread in three directions, and approached the house and barn. It was not really a bad fire, but seemed so to him. He watched it with terror, utter terror, believing if only he could wipe this sight from his eyes, he would be safe and sane. Then, while he struggled helplessly with the flames, his father stalked grimly out of the house.

That is the way he felt now, only now he was older, and his abasement was more pitiful and complete. There was nothing left of him save a desire to conform, to put a stop to the fire. Whatever there had been of soul in him died, and a piece of the world took its place.

He abandoned his truck in the yard and stumbled into the kitchen. When he turned on the lights the maltese cat rubbed at his heels. He screamed, and kicked at it like a girl.

In the bedroom the picture of Paul met his eyes. He snatched it down and tore it to pieces and stood swaying there.

They would get nothing on him: he would show them. He would be a man like the rest.

He would think and feel as they did. He would chew tobacco and swear and chase whores, and marry the first woman who'd have him.

He dropped to his knees at the dainty pink counterpane, and raised his falsetto voice to Heaven, praying God to help him to be a man.



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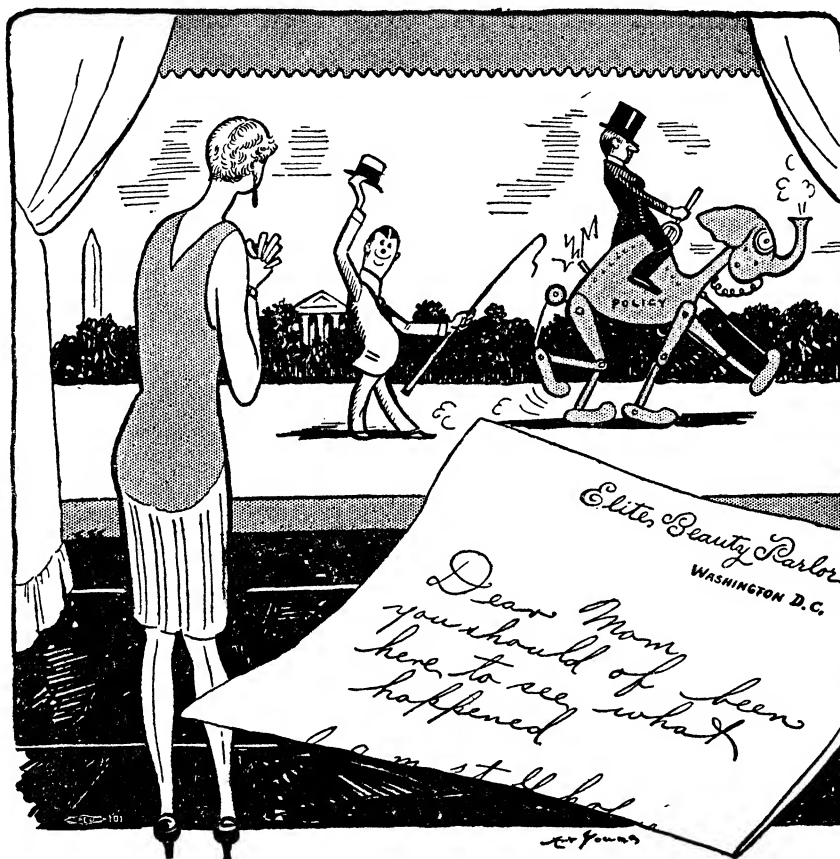
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So Mame gets behind the scenes of the great political show. She discovers that the greatest Man in the whole world rides an electric camelephant every morning in His pajamas in His bedroom; but she does not see why anyone should laugh, because "the undignified part would be if He was to ride a camelephant on the street in His pajamas." And she tells the girls in the Elite Beauty Parlors, "The reason it is a camelephant not a zebra is got nothing to do with prohibition but because it is ordered for His liver and a camelephant is a beast that has got a very bumpy gate." Nevertheless a ribald world persists in mockery, "telling all kinds of silly things like that it makes a racket while it runs or that the Spokesman takes a stenographer with Him and dictates His male while having a camelephant gallop."

There is the story that is give out from the big white house where the Spokesman speaks, that He is buying only one \$65 suit this spring. It was Mame's bright idea, but it turns out an awful flop, they have to rush

another story that He is buying a dozen suits at \$125 each, to save the wholesale clothing trade from bankruptcy.

Mame proposes that the Spokesman shall have a lot of His pictures took with His coat and collar off like the plain people, and riding on a hay-rake instead of an electric camelephant. The great Man is so pleased that He rushes word to the old homestead to water the hay and make it grow quick, and He hurries up with His private train and about a hundred reporters, "and one of them has got the promise of a picture of the Spokesman with His arm around His favorite cow that He milked when He was a boy and the general manager of the Amalgamated Press Association has telegraphed for a life-size picture of the Spokesman leading old Dobbin in from the pasture."

Mame is a serious nature, like the Spokesman Himself, and sweet and pure like His Administration. Her mind is all on her work of telling the American people what to think, therefore she resists the blandishments of her gentleman friend and sends him back to his wife, who is cruelly suspicious of manicure girls. On account of this happy ending the story is adapted for reading in the family circle, but you will have to spread a rug or blanket on the floor for the members of the family to roll on.

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